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BY THE LATE

M. D E F E N E L O N,

PRECEPTOR TO THE INFANTS OF

FRANCE, AND ARCHBISHOP-

DUKE OF CAMBRAY.

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I N T W O V O L U M E S.

V O L U M E F I R S T.

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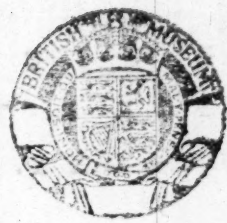
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THE
C O N T E N T S
OF
V O L U M E F I R S T.
DIALOGUES OF THE ANCIENTS.

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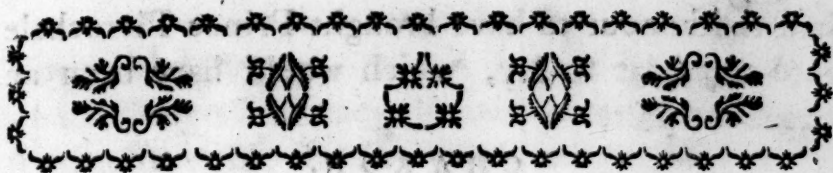
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DIALOGUES

OF THE


ANTIENTS.

DIALOGUE I.

MERCURY AND CHARON.

We behold here how those to whom the education of princes is entrusted ought to labour to correct the vices springing up in them, and inspire them with the virtues proper to their station.

CHARON.

 HAT has made thee tarry so long, that thou hast not come sooner? are there no more mortals yet dead? didst thou forget the wings of thy cap? hast thou been busy stealing? or had Jupiter sent thee a great distance upon any of his love-intrigues? hast thou been acting *Sofia*? speak, and keep me no longer in suspense.

MERCURY.

I have been acting a cully. I expected to have

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had the honour to have brought Prince Picrochole into thy boat to-day, which would have been an excellent prize.

CHARON.

What? so young!

MERCURY.

Yes; so young: he imagined himself in a very dangerous way, and shouted out, as if he had observed death coming to snatch him away.

CHARON.

Well; shall we have him?

MERCURY.

I shall trust him no more, he has cheated me so often; I have no more faith in him; he was scarce in bed till he forgot his sickness, and fell sound asleep.

CHARON.

But was it not a real illness?

MERCURY.

It was a slight indisposition, which he thought a great one. He has frequently given such alarms. I have heard him with his belly cut off when he had a fit of the cholic; another time, bleeding at the nose, he thought his soul was going to drop out into his handkerchief.

CHARON.

Surely he must be a very poor hero to go to war?

MERCURY.

War! that he makes with chess-men, secure from harm or pain: he has already fought more than an hundred battles.

CHARON.

That is a miserable war indeed! It sends me no passengers.



MERCURY.

Nevertheless I hope, that if he can but cast away his trifling effeminacy, he will some time make a great bustle. He has the wrath and tears of Achilles ; and who knows but he may likewise have his valour ? He is quarrelsome enough to resemble him ; and it is reported that he loves the Muses ; that he has a Chiron, and a Phenix.

CHARON.

But all this answers not our purpose : we would rather need a young Prince, brutal, ignorant, unpolished, who should contemn learning, and love nothing but arms ; who, always ready to glut himself with blood, should center all his glory in the misfortunes of mankind. Such a one would make my boat full once a day.

MERCURY.

O ho ! dost thou want some of those Princes, or rather monsters, greedy of slaughter ? This I assure thee, is more mild. I believe he will love peace, and yet know how to make war ; we see in him the beginnings of a great Prince, as we observe in the bud of a growing rose what promises a beautiful flower.

CHARON.

But is he not haughty and tyrannical ?

MERCURY.

That he is, to a great pitch.

CHARON.

What dost thou mean then by the Muses ? He never will know any thing ; he will spread disorder all around him, and will send us many a plaintive ghost ; but that is so much the better.

MERCURY.

He is tyrannical, but not wicked ; he is curious,

docile, and he has a high taste for fine things; he loves honest people, and kindly thanks them who correct him; if he do but get the better of his haughtiness and indolence, he will be a surprising man, I assure thee.

CHARON.

What! hasty and indolent! that is a contradiction: thou dreamest sure.

MERCURY.

No; I don't dream. He is hasty to be angry, and indolent in performing his duties; but he mends daily, and is undoubtedly reserved for noble actions.

CHARON.

Then I suppose we shall not have him so soon?

MERCURY.

No: his diseases are rather fits of impatience than real pains. Jove has given him to men to be a long blessing to them.



DIALOGUE II.

HERCULES AND THESEUS.

The history and characters of these two heroes are here given in a concise and curious manner, by the reproaches which they cast upon one another.

THESEUS.

HERCULES, I am astonished to behold thee here, I thought that thou wert seated in high Olympus with the gods. Fame spread so broad, that the fire upon mount Oeta had consumed all the mortal nature that thou hadst from the

mother, and that nothing of thee remained but what was come of Jove. It was currently reported that thou hadst married Hebe, who has plenty of leisure now, as Ganymede serves the nectar in her stead.

HERCULES.

Knowest thou not that this is only my ghost?

THESEUS.

No more see'st thou any thing but mine; though when it is here I have nothing in Olympus.

HERCULES.

That is, because thou art not, like me, one of Jupiter's sons.

THESEUS.

This is fine talking indeed! did not my mother Ethra, and my father Egeus say, that I was the son of Neptune, as Alcmena, to cloak her crime, while Amphitryon was at the siege of Thebes, made him believe that Jove had done her the honour to pay her a visit?

HERCULES.

Thou art very bold, methinks, thus to make a jest of the subduer of monsters. I never understood joking.

THESEUS.

But thy ghost is not much to be dreaded; I am not going into Olympus, to laugh at the expence of the immortalized son of Jove. As for monsters, I have subdued some in my time as well as thee.

HERCULES.

Darest thou presume to compare thy feeble enterprizes with my labours? The lion of Nemea, for which the Nemean games were instituted; the Lernean Hydra, with its multiplying heads, the Eremanthean boar, the brazen footed stag, the Stymphalian birds; the Amazon I stripped of her girdle,

the stable of Augeus, the bull I drew into Hesperia, Cacus, whom I subdued, Diomedes's horses, which fed on the flesh of men, three-headed Geryon, king of the Spains, the golden apples of the garden of the Hesperides ; lastly, Cerberus, whom I dragged out of hell, and obliged to face the light, will be for ever remembered by the world.

THESEUS.

And did not I overcome the robbers of Greece, drive Medea out of my father's house, kill the Minotaur, and find the Egris of the Labyrinth, which was the occasion of instituting the Isthmic games ? and they are surely nothing inferior to those of Nemea ; moreover, I vanquished the Amazons, who came to lay siege to Athens : to these exploits add the combat of the Lapithae, Jason's voyage for the golden fleece, and the hunting of the Calydonian boar, which I had so great a share in ; nay, I ventured as well as thee to descend into Pluto's dreary realm.

HERCULES.

Ay, but thou wast punished for thy foolish enterprise ; thou didst not lay hold of Proserpine ; Cerberus, whom I dragged out of his gloomy den, devoured thy friend before thine eyes, and thou remainedst a captive ; hast thou forgot that Castor and Pollux retook their sister Helen out of thy hands ? Thou didst also suffer them to carry off thy poor mother Ethra ; and all this speaks but a puny hero : in short, thou wast banished from Athens ; and upon thy retiring into the isle of Scyros, Lycomedes, who knew how accustomed thou wert to undertake unlawful enterprizes, in order to be beforehand with thee, threw thee headlong from the summit of a rock. There was a noble death !

THESEUS.

And, pray, was thine more honourable? to fall in love with Omphale, with whom thou didst handle the distaff; then to forsake her for the young Iole, to the prejudice of poor Dejanira, to whom thou hadst plighted thy faith; to receive and put on the Tunic, drenched in the blood of the centaur Nessus; to become so outrageous as to throw poor Lychas, who had done nothing to thee, down from the rocks of mount Oeta into the ocean; and when expiring, to intreat Philoctetes to conceal thy sepulchre, that the world might believe thee a God? Was this end more glorious than mine? It must be confessed, that before I was banished by the Athenians, I had brought them out of their towns, where they lived quite barbarous, in order to civilize them, and to give them laws within the bounds of a new city. As for thee, thou wert far enough from being a law-giver; all thy merit lay in thy sinewy arms, and broad shoulders.

HERCULES.

My shoulders have supported the world, to relieve Atlas; besides, my bravery was admired; 'tis true, I was too much given to women, but it well becomes thee to reproach me with it! thee, that didst ungratefully forsake Ariadne, who saved thy life in Crete; dost thou think I have not heard of the Amazon Antiope, to whom thou wast also unfaithful? nor was Egle, who succeeded her, more fortunate; thou hadst carried off Helen, but her brothers found means to punish thee for it; Phedra had blinded thee to so great a pitch, that she induced thee to destroy thy son Hippolytus, whom thou hadst by the Amazon; several others possessed thy heart, and did not a long time keep it.

THESEUS.

But after all, I never spun like him, who supported the world upon his shoulders.

HERCULES.

I give up to thee my mean and effeminate life in Lydia, but all the rest is above man.

THESEUS.

A greater shame for thee, that all the rest being above man, that passage should be so far beneath him; moreover, thy labours thou dost so much boast, thou performedst only in obedience to Eurystheus.

HERCULES.

Juno, 'tis true, had subjected me to her will; 'tis the fate of virtue to be delivered up to the persecution of base and wicked people; but her persecution served only to exercise my patience and courage: on the contrary, thou wast frequently guilty of acts of injustice. Happy had it been for the world, hadst thou never got out of the labyrinth.

THESEUS.

It was I who delivered Athens from the tribute of seven young men, and as many girls, which Minos had imposed on it, for the death of his son Androgeos. Alas! my unhappy father Egeus, who looked out for me, thinking he saw the black sail instead of the white, plunged himself into the sea, and I found him dead at my arrival; from that time I governed Athens wisely.

HERCULES.

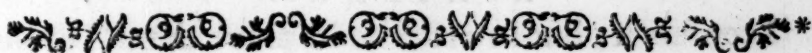
How couldst thou govern it, seeing thou wast daily busied in some new warlike exploits, and didst set all Greece on fire by thy amours?

THESEUS.

Let us talk no more of amours; in that scandalous point we are nothing behind hand with each other.

HERCULES.

Ingenuously I confess it; and even yield to thee in point of eloquence; but what decides betwixt us is, that thou art in the lower regions, at Pluto's mercy, whom thou hast enraged, whereas I am in the rank of the immortals in high Olympus.



DIALOGUE III.

ACHILLES AND CHIRON.

A striking picture of the calamities to which hot-headed youth expose a Prince born to command.

ACHILLES.

OF what use are thy instructions now to me? thou didst never talk to me of any thing but wisdom, valour, glory, heroism; with all thy brilliant discourses, here I am become an empty shadow; had it not been better for me to have passed a long and pleasant life at the court of King Lycomedes, in a woman's dress, with the Princesses, daughters of that King?

CHIRON.

Well; wilt thou beg leave of fate to return amongst those girls? thou shalt spin, thou shalt lose all thy glory; a second siege of Troy shall be formed without thee; the haughty Agamemnon, thy enemy, shall be sung by Homer; Thersites himself

shall not be forgotten; but as for thee, thou shalt be scandalously buried in oblivion.

ACHILLES.

What, would Agamemnon despoil me of my glory! I remain in scandalous oblivion! I cannot bear the thought, and had rather fall once more by the coward Paris's hand.

CHIRON.

My instructions upon virtue are not then to be despised.

ACHILLES.

I confess it; but in order to improve them, I could wish to return to the world.

CHIRON.

What wouldst thou do there a second time?

ACHILLES.

Do there! I would avoid the quarrel I had with Agamemnon, and should thereby save the life of my friend Patroclus, and the blood of so many other Greeks, whom I suffered to die by the cruel swords of the Trojans, while I was rolling for despair upon the sea-shore like a crazy person.

CHIRON.

But had I not foretold thee that thy passion would make thee commit these fooleries?

ACHILLES.

'Tis true, thou hadst told it me an hundred times; but does youth give ear to what is told it? it believes only what it sees. O could I but grow young again!

CHIRON.

Thou wouldst again grow passionate and untractable.

ACHILLES.

I promise thee, I would not.

CHIRON.

Ah! hadst not thou promised me an hundred and an hundred times, in my Thessalian cave, to command thyself, when thou wert at the siege of Troy? but didst thou do it?

ACHILLES.

I own I did not.

CHIRON.

Wert thou to grow young again, thou wouldst do it no better; thou wouldst promise, as thou dost promise, and wouldst keep thy word, as thou didst keep it.

ACHILLES.

Youth is then a strange distemper!

CHIRON.

Yet thou wouldst again be ill of it.

ACHILLES.

'Tis true; but youth would be delightful, could it be rendered moderate, and capable of reflexion. Now thou who knowest so many remedies, hast thou never a one to cure that fiery heat, that boiling of the blood, more dangerous than a raging fever?

CHIRON.

The remedy is to fear one's self, to credit wise men, to call them to assistance, so to improve past faults, as to foresee those that are to be avoided for the future, and frequently to invoke Minerva, whose wisdom is far beyond the outrageous valour of Mars.

ACHILLES.

Well, I'll do all this, if thou canst obtain of Jupiter to recal me to the blooming youth I once enjoyed; prevail with him to restore thee also to the light, and so to subject me to thy commands, as Hercules was to those of Eurysheus.

CHIRON.

I consent. I shall put up that prayer to the father of the gods, and I know that he will hear me; thou shalt revive after a long series of years, with genius, elevation of spirit, courage, taste for the Muses, but with an impatient and outrageous temper; thou shalt have Chiron at thy side, and we shall see in what manner thou wilt make use of him.



DIALOGUE IV.

ACHILLES AND HOMER.

An excellent way of making a young Prince take delight in glory and polite literature.

ACHILLES.

HOMER, I am transported with joy at having been the means of immortalizing thee. My quarrel with Agamemnon, my sorrow for the death of Patroclus, my combats with the Trojans, and the victory I obtained over Hector, gave thee the finest subject of a poem that ever was seen.

HOMER.

I confess that the subject is a fine one; but I might easily have found other as fine subjects: one proof that there are such, is, that I actually found some. The adventures of the wise and patient Ulysses are surely equal to the wrath of the impetuous Achilles?

ACHILLES.

What! compare the cunning and deceitful Ulysses with the son of Thetis, more terrible than

Mars himself! Begone, ungrateful poet, or thou shalt feel——

HOMER.

Thou hast forgot that ghosts ought never to put themselves in a passion, a shade's wrath is not much to be feared; thou now hast no other arms to make use of but good arguments.

ACHILLES.

Why do you then disown that you owe to me the glory of thy noblest poem? The other is only a rhapsody of old women's tales; every thing is languid, every thing favours of its old bard, whose vivacity is extinguished, and who never knows when to have done.

HOMER.

Thou resemblest a great many people, who for want of being acquainted with the various sorts of writing, fancy that an author flags, when he passes from a fiery and rapid kind to another more gentle and moderate; whereas they ought to know, that perfection consists in always observing the different characters, in varying the style according to the subjects, in rising and sinking with propriety, and in giving, by such a contrast, more agreeable characters: one should know how to sound the trumpet, to touch the lyre, and even to play upon the rural pipe. I imagine thou wouldst have me paint Calypso with her nymphs in her grotto, or Nauficae on the sea-shore, as the heroes and gods themselves, fighting at the gates of Troy. Talk of war, it is thy province, and never take upon thee to decide on poetry when I am present.

ACHILLES.

O! how imperious thou art, good blind bard! thou takest advantage of my death.

HOMER.

I take advantage also of my own; thou art no longer any thing but the ghost of Achilles, and I that of Homer.

ACHILLES.

Ah! why can't I exert some of my former might upon this unthankful shade!

HOMER.

Since thou insistest so much upon my ingratitude, I will now at length undeceive thee. Thou hast furnished me with but one subject, which I could have found elsewhere; but I have given thee a glory, which no other could have given thee, and which never will decay.

ACHILLES.

How! dost thou imagine that the great Achilles would not have been admired by all nations, and in all ages, without thy verses?

HOMER.

Delightful vanity! for having spilt more blood than another, at the siege of a city which was not taken till after thou wert dead! How many heroes are there, who after subduing mighty kingdoms, and conquering mighty nations, lie, nevertheless, in the darkness of oblivion, nor are their very names known? The Muses alone can immortalize illustrious exploits. A King, who loves glory, has two things to do to obtain it; he first must deserve it by virtue, and then make himself beloved by the darlings of the Muses, who can sing it to all future generations.

ACHILLES.

But it does not always depend on Princes to have great poets; it was by chance, and long after my death, that thou conceivedst the design of composing thy Iliad.

HOMER.

True; but when a prince loves learning, there are always abundance of learned men formed during his reign; his rewards and esteem excite a noble emulation; taste improves; let him but be a favourer and lover of the Muses, and they will soon produce inspired men, to praise whatever is laudable in him; when a Prince wants a Homer, it is owing to his being unworthy to have one; his want of taste attracts ignorance, grossness, and barbarism; barbarism dishonours a whole nation, and takes away all hopes of lasting glory from the Prince who reigns over it. Knowest thou not that Alexander, who not long ago came down among us, wept that he had had no poet to do for him, what I have done for thee? This shewed his good taste of glory: as for thee, thou owest every thing to me, and yet thinkest no shame to call me ungrateful; it is no longer time to fly out; thy wrath before Troy was good to furnish me the subject of a poem; but I cannot sing the transports thou mightest have here, and so they would do thee no honour. Remember only, that the fatal sister, having deprived thee of all other advantages, thou hast now nothing left, but the great name thou holdest of my verses. Farewell. When thou art in better humour, I shall come and sing to thee in this grove certain passages of the Iliad; such as, the defeat of the Greeks in thy absence, the astonishment of the Trojans, the moment thou appearedst to revenge Patroclus; the gods themselves, surprized to see thee, as tho' it had been Almighty Jove: after that, say, if thou darest, that Homer did not give Achilles all his glory.



DIALOGUE V.

ACHILLES AND ULYSSES.

The characters of Achilles and Ulysses.

U L Y S S E S.

GOOD-morrow, son of Thetis: I am at last come down, after a long life, to these dark abodes, whereinto thou wast precipitated in the bloom of youth.

A C H I L L E S.

I did not live long, because the unjust Fates did not allow that I should acquire more glory than they are willing to grant to mortals.

U L Y S S E S.

They suffered me, however, to live a long time, amidst great perils, from which I always honourably extricated myself.

A C H I L L E S.

What honour was it to prevail always by craft? For my part, I never knew how to dissemble, I knew only how to conquer.

U L Y S S E S.

Nevertheless I was judged, after you died, the most worthy to bear thy arms.

A C H I L L E S.

Poh! thou obtainedst them by thy eloquence, not by thy valour. It shocks me to think that arms, made by the god Vulcan, and which my mother gave me, should have been the recompence of an artful babbler.

U L Y S S E S.

Know that I have done greater things than thou: thou didst fall before the city of Troy, while yet in all its glory; but I it was who overthrew it.

A C H I L L E S.

'Tis more honourable to die by the unjust wrath of the gods, after having overcome one's enemies, than to put an end to a war by lurking in a horse's belly, and by making use of the mysteries of Minerva, in order to deceive one's enemies.

U L Y S S E S.

Hast thou then forgot that the Greeks owe Achilles himself to me? If it had not been for me, thou wouldst have passed an inglorious life amongst the daughters of King Lycomedes; to me thou owest all the glorious exploits which I obliged thee to perform.

A C H I L L E S.

But after all, I did perform them, and thou never didst perform any thing but acts of deceit; as for me, my being amongst Lycomedes's daughters, was owing to my mother Thetis, who knew that I was to be slain at the siege of Troy, and had concealed me there, in order to save my life: but thou, who wert not to die, why wert thou playing the mad-man with thy plough, when Palamedes so artfully discovered the trick? O! what joy it is to see a biter bit! He laid Telemachus, dost thou remember, in the furrow, to see if thou wouldst drive the plough over thy own son.

U L Y S S E S.

I do remember it, but I loved Penelope, and was unwilling to leave her. Didst not thou commit greater follies for Briseis, when thou desertedst

the camp of the Greeks, and wast the occasion of the death of thy friend Patroclus?

ACHILLES.

Ay; but when I returned, I revenged Patroclus, and conquered Hector. Whom didst thou ever conquer in thy life, if it was not Irus, that beggar of Ithaca.

ULYSSES.

The lovers of Penelope, and the Cyclop Polyphemus.

ACHILLES.

Thou treacherously took'st those lovers knapping; they were men intoxicated by pleasures, and almost always drunk: as for Polyphemus, thou shouldst be silent about him; hadst thou dared to stay, he would have made thee pay very dear for the eye thou boredst out to him when he was sleeping.

ULYSSES.

But after all, I encountered for twenty years together at the siege of Troy, and in my travels, all the dangers and disasters that can exercise the courage and conduct of man. But what hadst thou ever to conduct? There was nothing in thee but a mad impetuosity, and a fury, which the vulgar name courage: the hand of the coward Paris put a stop to its career.

ACHILLES.

But thou, who boastest of thy prudence, didst thou not foolishly get thyself killed by thy own son Telegonus, whom thou hadst by Circe, only for want of the precaution of discovering thyself to him? There is a pleasant sage now to call me a fool!

ULYSSES.

Begone; I leave thee with the ghost of Ajax, as brutal as thyself, and as jealous of my glory.



DIALOGUE VI.

ULYSSES AND GRILLUS.

The condition of men would be worse than that of beasts, if solid philosophy and true religion did not support them.

ULYSSES.

ARE you not very well pleased, my dear Gryllus, to see me again, and to be in a capacity of re-assuming your ancient form?

GRILLUS.

I am well pleased to see you, favourite of Minerva; but as for the change of form, you'll excuse me, if you please.

ULYSSES.

Alas! child, do you know what a figure you make? Most certainly you have no fine person; you have a huge body, bending towards the earth, long dangling ears, small eyes, scarce half open, a frightful snout, a most disadvantageous physiognomy, nasty hair, coarse and bristly; in short, you are altogether a horrid personage; I tell it you, if you don't know it; and if you have ever so little spirit, you will think yourself too happy to become man again.

GRILLUS.

Say what you will, I shall do no such thing. The hog's trade is much prettier. 'Tis true, my shape is not very pretty, but that I shall be rid of, if I never view myself in a glass; and, indeed, by the humour I have some time been in, I am in no

great danger of looking into the water, and reproaching myself there with my ugliness; I like a good puddle better than a clear fountain.

U L Y S S E S.

Does not such nastiness give you horror? You live upon nothing but ordure; you wallow in infectious places; you stink always enough to make one's stomach rise.

G R Y L L U S.

No matter; all depends on taste: that smell is sweeter to me than that of amber: and that ordure is nectar to me.

U L Y S S E S.

I blush for you; is it possible that you have so soon forgot what is noble and advantageous in humanity!

G R Y L L U S.

Speak no more of humanity to me; its nobleness is only imaginary; all its evils are real, and its goods are but in idea. I have a nasty body, covered with bristly hair, but then I have no more need of cloaths; and you would be happier in your woful adventures, had you a body as hairy as mine, to supply the want of cloathing: I find my food every where, even in the most loathsome places; law-suits, and wars, and all the other perplexities of life are no longer any thing to me; I want neither cook, nor barber, taylor, nor architect; so you see I am free, and content at little expence. Why then should I re-involve myself in the necessities of mankind?

U L Y S S E S.

'Tis true, man has great wants, but the arts he has invented to satisfy those wants, turn to his glory, and are his delight.

G R Y L L U S.

It is safer to be free from all those wants, than to have the most marvellous means of remedying them; one had better enjoy a perfect state of health, without any knowledge of medicine, than be ever ailing, with the most excellent remedies.

U L Y S S E S.

But, my dear Gryllus, you no longer then make any account of eloquence, poetry, music, the knowledge of arts, and of the whole world, that of figures, and of numbers? Have you renounced your dear country, the sacrifices, feasts, games, dances, combats, and the crowns, the rewards of the conquerors? Answer me.

G R Y L L U S.

My hoggish temper is so happy as to make me above all those fine things. I had rather grunt than be as eloquent as you; what puts me out of conceit with eloquence is, that even yours, which almost equals that of Minerva herself, does neither persuade nor touch me; I have no inclination to persuade any one, and no occasion to be persuaded; I am as little curious of verse as of prose; all that is grown mere empty sound to me; for combats of wrestling and chariots, I freely leave them to such as are as fond of a crown, as children of their playthings; I am no longer nimble enough to gain the prize, and shall not at all envy it in another, less encumbered with bacon and fat; as to music, I have lost the relish for it, and taste determines every thing; taste, which attaches you to it, hath loosed me from my attachment: but let us talk no more of the matter; return to Ithaca. A hog's country is wherever there are acorns. Go, reign, visit Penelope again, punish her lovers: as for me, my Penelope is

the fow hard by, who reigns in my fty, and nothing disturbs my empire. A great many Kings, in gilded palaces, cannot attain my happinefs; the world calls them drones, and undeserving of a throne, when they incline to reign like me, without tormenting mankind.

U L Y S S E S.

You don't confider that a hog is at the mercy of men, and that it is fattened only to have its throat cut; with this fine reasoning you will foon end your days; and men, whose rank you don't chufe to be in, will feed upon your bacon, your puddings, and your hams.

G R Y L L U S.

That, without doubt, is the danger of my condition: but has not yours alfo dangers attendant upon it? I expofe myself to death by an agreeable life, whereof the pleafure is real; you expofe yourself to a fudden death, by a miserable life, and for a chimerical glory. Hence I conclude, that it is better to be a hog than a hero. Were Apollo himfelf one day to fing your victories, his fong would not alleviate your pains, nor would it fecure you from death. The regimen of a hog is preferable.

U L Y S S E S.

You are then grown fenfelefs and favage enough to condemn the knowledge which makes men almoft equal to the gods?

G R Y L L U S.

On the contrary, 'tis out of knowledge that I defpife men; 'tis impiety to fuppofe that they refemble the gods, feeing they are blind and unjuft, deceitful, mifchievous, wretched, and deferving to be fo, cruelly armed againft one another, and as much enemies to themfelves as to their neighbours.

What is the effect of that so much boasted knowledge? It does not change the manners of mankind; it tends only to flatter and gratify their passions. Were it not better to have no reason at all, than to have it to authorize the most unreasonable things? Ah! speak no more to me of man; he is the most unjust, and, consequently, the most unreasonable of all animals. Without flattery, an hog is a pretty good sort of body; he makes neither false money nor false contracts; he never perjures himself; he has neither avarice, nor ambition; glory never prompts him to make unjust conquests; he is ingenious, and without malice; he spends his life in eating, drinking, and sleeping; were every body like him, every body would sleep as soundly, and you would not be here; Paris had not committed the rape of Helen; the Greeks had not overthrown the mighty city of Troy, after a ten years siege; you never had so wandered by sea and land at the will of fortune, and should have had no occasion to conquer your own kingdom. Talk no more to me, therefore, of reason; for men have nothing but folly. Is it not better to be a beast, than a wicked fool?

U L Y S S E S.

I confess I am not a little surprized at your stupidity!

G R Y L L U S.

A mighty wonder truly, that a hog should be stupid! Every one ought to support his character; you support yours of man, restless, eloquent, haughty, full of artifice, and disturber of the public peace: the nation, in which I am incorporated, is modest, of few words, and hates all subtilty and fine speech-

es. It goes directly to pleasure, without delaying to argue the matter.

U L Y S S E S.

However, you cannot deny that the immortality reserved for men exalts their condition infinitely above the beasts. I am quite frightened at the blindness of Gryllus, when I think that he esteems the delights of the Elysian fields, where men live happy after their death, as nothing.

G R Y L L U S.

Stop, if you please; I am not so much a hog as to renounce the estate of man, would you shew me in him a real immortality; but to be a ghost, and that a plaintive ghost, which regrets, even in the Elysian fields, the parting with this wretched world, I own that such a shadow of immortality is not worth suffering any constraint for. Achilles, in the Elysian fields, is now playing at quoit upon the grass; but he would give all his glory, which is indeed but a dream, to be the infamous Thersites in the land of the living; that Achilles, so much cured of his passion for glory, is nothing; he is no more himself? his former boldness and sentiments are now no longer discernable in him; 'tis an I don't know what, that remains of him, only to do him dishonour; that vain shadow is no more Achilles, than mine is my body: think not, therefore, eloquent Ulysses, to dazzle me with a false appearance of immortality; I am for somewhat more real, for want of which I persist in keeping my present state; shew me that man has in him something more noble than his body, and which is exempt from corruption; shew me that what thinks in man is not the body, but still subsists after the dissolution of that rude and disordered machine; in short, make ap-

pear that what remains of man after this life is a being really happy; evincethat the gods are not unjust, and that there is beyond this life a solid reward for virtue, continually suffering here below; that instant, divine son of Laertes, I run through dangers with you; I leave Circe's sty contented; I am no more a hog, I become again man, and man upon guard against all pleasures: by no other way shall you ever bring me to your desire; I had rather be a great greasy hog, content with my ordure, than be a man, weak, vain, inconstant, malicious, deceitful, and dishonest, who hopes to be after his death but a dismal moaning ghost, and a phantom, not satisfied with its condition.



DIALOGUE VII.

ROMULUS AND REMUS.

Greatness attained by guilt can give neither real glory, nor solid happiness.

REMUS.

SO, brother, you are at last in the same state with myself! This was not worth putting me to death for; the few years you reigned alone are past and gone; there is nothing of them remaining; and you would have passed them more delightfully had you lived in peace, and shared the authority with me.

ROMULUS.

Had I had that moderation, I should neither have founded the mighty city I have established,

nor made the conquests that have immortalized me.

REMUS.

You had better been less powerful, and more just and virtuous. I appeal to Minos and his two colleagues, who are going to judge you.

ROMULUS.

That is very hard. Upon earth none would have presumed to judge me.

REMUS.

You will be condemned here below by my blood, in which you imbrued your hands, your reputation will be for ever blackened upon earth. You wanted authority and glory: authority did but just pass through your hands, and vanished away like a dream; as for glory, you will never have any. He cannot be a great man, who is not first an honest man; and he who aspires to the virtues of the gods, should leave off crimes which are unworthy of men. You had the inhumanity of a monster, and you pretended to be a hero!

ROMULUS.

You durst not talk to me after this manner, when we were tracing out our city, without impunity.

REMUS.

That is true, as I found to my cost: but whence comes it that you are come down to these dreary mansions? It was reported that you were become immortal.

ROMULUS.

I was thought to be so by none but my foolish subjects.



DIALOGUE VIII.

ROMULUS AND TATIUS.

Real heroism is incompatible with fraud and violence.

TATIUS.

I Arrived here a little sooner than you; but, at last we are both here; and you are no farther forward than myself, nor better in your affairs.

ROMULUS.

There is a great odds: I can boast the glory of having founded an eternal city, with an empire which shall have no other bounds than those of the universe; I have overcome the neighbouring kingdoms; I have formed an invincible people, out of a parcel of fugitive criminals; what hast thou ever done that may be put in parrallel with these wonders?

TATIUS.

Fine wonders truly! To get together a gang of banditti, and turn their ring-leader, to ravage the neighbouring countries with impunity, treacherously to carry off women, to have fraud and violence for one's only law, to murder one's own brother; these are things, 'tis true, I have not done. Thy city will stand as long as the gods shall please; but it is raised upon very bad foundations. As for thine empire, it may easily extend; for thou taughtst thy citizens nothing else but to usurp the property of others. Great need have they to be governed by a king more moderate and just than thou; and indeed I am told that Numa, my son-in-law, hath

succeeded thee: he is wise, just, religious, beneficent; this is exactly the man wanted to reform thy commonwealth, and to repair thy fault.

ROMULUS.

It is an easy thing to pass one's life in judging law-suits, appeasing quarrels, and causing polity to be observed in a city; this is a foolish conduct, and an obscure life: but to obtain victories, to gain conquests, that is what makes the hero.

TATIUS.

Fine talking! 'tis a strange heroism that, which tends only to murder those one is jealous of.

ROMULUS.

How! murder! I find thou suspectest me of having caused thy death.

TATIUS.

I do by no means suspect thee: for I make not the least doubt of it; nay, I am certain of it. Thou hadst been long impatient of my sharing the royalty with thee; all who have passed the Styx since I did, have informed me that thou didst not even save the appearances: no regret was there for my death, no care taken to revenge it, or to punish him who assassinated me, but thou hast had thy desert. When wicked men are taught to slay one king, they will soon find an opportunity to dispatch another.

ROMULUS.

Well, tho' I had been the occasion of thy murder, I should but have followed the example of falseness thou hadst set me in deceiving that poor young woman Tarpeia; thou didst want her to let thee come up with thy troops to surprise the rock which was from her name called Tarpeian; and for that end hadst promised her what the Sabines wore on their left arms. She imagined she was

to be in possession of the valuable bracelets she had seen; but instead of them she received all the bucklers, under which she was buried on the spot: there was a perfidious and cruel action!

TATIUS.

Thine of causing me to be treacherously butchered is of a yet blacker dye: for we had sworn alliance, and united our two kingdoms. But I am revenged; thy senators found effectual means to put a stop to thy boldness and tyranny. There remained not the smallest particle of thy mangled body; every one probably took care to carry off his piece under his robe, and thus wert thou made a god! Proculus saw thee with the majesty of an immortal. Do these honours not satisfy thee, thou who art so vain-glorious?

ROMULUS.

Not over well: but there is no remedy for my hard fate: they first tear me to pieces, and then fall down and worship me. 'Tis really a kind of derision. If I was yet living, I would——

TATIUS.

It belongs not to you to threaten now: ghosts are but as nothing. Adieu, haughty wretch, I abandon thee.



D I A L O G U E IX.

ROMULUS AND NUMA POMPILIUS.

How much more solid the glory of a wise and peaceful king is than that of an unjust conqueror.

ROMULUS.

YOU have been a long time in coming here, you have had a surprising long reign.

NUMA POMPILIUS.

The reason is, it has been very peaceable. The means of arriving at a good old age upon a throne, is to injure no-body, not to abuse authority, and to act in such a manner, that no man may have any interest in wishing our death.

ROMULUS.

When one governs so moderately, he lives obscurely and dies without glory: he has the trouble of governing, and authority gives him no pleasure: it is far better to conquer, to bear down all opposition, and to aspire to immortality.

NUMA POMPILIUS.

But in what, I pray you, consists your immortality? I heard you were in the rank of the gods, quaffing nectar at the table of Jove; how happens it then that I find you here?

ROMULUS.

To speak ingenuously, the senators, grown jealous of my power, made away with me, and loaded me with honours after pulling me to pieces: they

chose rather to invoke me as a god, than obey me as their king.

NUMA POMPILIUS.

How! there was no truth in Proculus's story then?

ROMULUS.

Oh! do you not know how many things the people are made to believe? but why say I so? nobody knows better than you, who persuaded them that you were inspired by the nymph Egeria. Proculus seeing the people exasperated at my death, was willing to soothe them by a fable. Men love to be deceived: flattery asswages the greatest griefs.

NUMA POMPILIUS.

All your immortality then was only some mortal stabs.

ROMULUS.

But I have had altars, priests, victims, and incense.

NUMA POMPILIUS.

That incense is no sort of balsam; you are nothing the less here a vain and impotent shadow, without hopes of ever seeing again the light of day. You see then that there is nothing so solidly advantageous as being good, just, moderate, and beloved by one's people: for provided a person lives long, and is always in peace, he has no incense indeed, and does not pass for immortal; but he enjoys good health, reigns without disturbance, and does a great deal of good to the people he governs.

ROMULUS.

You who lived so long, were not young when you were crowned.

NUMA POMPILIUS.

I was forty years old, and that was my happi-

ness: had I begun to reign sooner, I had been without experience and without wisdom, exposed to all my passions. Power is too dangerous a thing when one is young and fiery: and of that you had fatal experience, by killing your brother when you were in a passion, which made you insupportable to all your citizens.

ROMULUS.

'To have lived so long, you must have had a strong and faithful guard about you.

NUMA POMPILIUS.

So far from that, the first thing I did was to part with those three hundred guards you had selected, which were called Celereſ. A man who reluctantly accepts the royalty, who does not chuse it but for the public good, and would be content to resign it, is not afraid of death like a tyrant. For my part, I thought I did the Romans a favour in governing them: I lived poor, to make the people rich; all the neighbouring nations would have wished to be under my conduct. In this situation, what occasion had I for guards? As for me, a poor mortal, it was no-body's interest to bestow on me the immortality of which the senate thought you worthy. My guard was the affection of the citizens, who regarded me as their father. May not a king trust his life to a people, which trusts him with their property, their peace, their preservation? The confidence is equal on both sides.

ROMULUS.

To hear you talk, one would imagine you had been king contrary to your inclination: but you deceived the people in that, as you imposed on them in the affair of religion.

NUMA POMPILIUS.

They came and brought me out of my retirement at Cures; at first I represented, that I was by no means fit to govern a warlike people, accustomed to conquests; that they would need a Romulus, always ready to vanquish: I added, that Tatius's death and your's made me not over ambitious of succeeding those two kings; in short, I represented that I had never been at war, they persisted in desiring me: I yielded: but I always lived poor, plain, moderate in the royalty, without preferring myself to any citizen. I so united the two nations of the Sabines and Romans, that they cannot now be distinguished. I revived the golden age; all the nations not only adjacent to Rome, but even throughout Italy, tasted the plenty I every where diffused: agriculture, brought into repute, civilized the savage people, and attached them to their country, without giving them a restless passion to invade the lands of their neighbours.

ROMULUS.

Such peace and plenty serve only to puff up a people, to render them stubborn to their sovereign, and effeminate in themselves; insomuch that they are never after able to support the toils and dangers of war. Had any power come to attack you, what would you have done; you who had never seen any thing of war? You must have told the enemy to stay till you had consulted the nymph.

NUMA POMPILIUS.

If I did not know how to make war like you, I knew how to avoid it, and to get myself respected and beloved by all my neighbours. I gave the Romans laws, which, by making them just, laborious and sober, will render them for ever sufficiently for-

midable to any who would wish to attack them. I still greatly fear that they retain too much of the spirit of rapine and violence which you had inculcated into them.



DIALOGUE X.

XERXES AND LEONIDAS.

Wisdom and valour render States invincible, and not the great number of subjects, nor the unbounded authority of princes.

XERXES.

L EONIDAS, I intend to do thee a great honour: be it thy own fault, if thou art not after this always in my retinue on the Stygian shore.

LEONIDAS.

I came down hither for no other end but to avoid ever seeing thee, and to repel thy tyranny. Go seek thy slaves and thy flatterers, which are thy proper company.

XERXES.

Do but mark the rude, insolent fellow! a beggarly dog, who never had any thing but the name of king, without the authority; a captain of a gang of robbers. What! hast thou the impudence to compare thyself to the great king? Hast thou then forgot how I covered the earth with soldiers, and the ocean with ships? Dost thou not know that my army could not slake its thirst at one meal without drying up whole rivers?

LEONIDAS.

Howdarest thou boast the numbers of thy troops? three hundred Spartans, whom I commanded at Thermopylae, were cut off by thy numberless army, but could not be conquered: they fell not, till tired with slaughter. Seest thou not those crowds of wandering shades that cover the shore? These are the twenty thousand Persians we slew: ask them how many other men, and especially of thine, one single Spartan is worth. It is valour, and not number, that makes troops invincible.

XERXES.

That action of thine was an effort of despair and fury.

LEONIDAS.

No; it was a wise and generous action: we thought it our duty to devote ourselves to a certain death, in order to teach thee what it is to pretend to enslave the Greeks, and in order to give all Greece time to prepare itself to conquer, or perish like ourselves: and actually that example of courage did surprize the Persians, and re-animate the discouraged Grecians. Our death was well bestowed.

XERXES.

Oh! how sorry I am that I did not enter into the Peloponnesis after having laid waste Attica! I would have laid thy Lacedemon in ashes, as I did Athens; and thee, haughty wretch, I would have—

LEONIDAS.

'Tis no time now either to abuse or flatter; we are now in the land of truth. Dost thou imagine thou art still the great king? thy treasures are far away from thee; thou hast no more guards nor armies, no more pomp nor pleasures; panegyrics come no more to tickle thine ears. Thou now art nak-

ed, single, and about to be judged by Minos: but thy ghost is very passionate and impudent; thou wert not more furious when thou commandest the sea to be whipt; for which piece of foolish madness thou didst well deserve whipping thyself: and those gilded chains, dost thou remember them? which thou causedst to be thrown into the Hellespont, in order to hold the storms in thy slavery. A pretty fellow, to overcome the sea! thou wert soon after glad to repass with all speed into Asia, in a bark, like a poor fisher-man. Behold what the vanity of men comes to, who want to force the laws of nature, and to forget their own feebleness.

XERXES.

Ah! kings who can do any thing (I see it plainly, but alas! I see it too late) fall a prey to all their passions. How is it possible for one that is a man to resist his own power, and the flattery of all about him? O what a misfortune it is to be born amidst such great dangers!

LEONIDAS.

That is the reason why I reckon my royalty preferable to thine: I was king upon condition of leading an hard, sober and laborious life, like my people. I was king for no other end but to defend my country, and to make the laws reign: my royalty gave me the power of doing good without allowing me to do evil.

XERXES.

Ay, but thou wast poor, without splendor, without authority; one of my satraps was far greater and more magnificent than thou.

LEONIDAS.

I should not indeed have had wherewithal to pierce mount Athos like thee; nay, I believe that

every one of thy fatraps stole away more gold and silver than we had in our whole commonwealth: but our arms, without being gilded, could very well make shift to pierce these cowardly and effeminate fellows, whose innumerable multitude made thee put so vain a confidence in.

X E R X E S.

But after all, had I entered immediately into the Peloponnesis, all Greece had been in chains; not a city, no not even thine, could have been able to resist me.

L E O N I D A S.

I believe it might have been as thou sayest, and 'tis that makes me despise the great power of a savage people, which is neither instructed nor disciplined. They want wise counsels, or if any such are offered, they know not how to follow them, and always prefer others that are feeble or deceitful.

X E R X E S.

The Greeks were proposing to make a wall, in order to close the Isthmus; but it was not yet made; and so I could have entered.

L E O N I D A S.

The wall was not yet made, it is true; but thou wert not created to prevent those who proposed to make it. Thy weakness was a yet greater security to the Greeks than their own strength.

X E R X E S.

Had I taken that Isthmus, I would have shewn—

L E O N I D A S.

Some other blunder; for some such thou must needs have committed, depraved as thou wert by luxury, pride, and an abhorrence of sincere counsels: thou wert easier to surprize than the Isthmus.

XERXES.

But I was neither so cowardly nor so foolish as thou imaginest.

LEONIDAS.

Thou hadst naturally courage and goodness of heart: the tears which thou didst shed at the sight of so many thousands, not one of whom was to remain on the earth before the end of an hundred years, sufficiently declare thy humanity. That was the most admirable scene of thy life. If thou hadst not been too powerful and happy a king, thou wouldst have been a tolerably honest man.



DIALOGUE XI.

SOLON AND PISISTRATUS.

Tyranny is frequently more fatal to the sovereign than the subject.

SOLON.

WELL, by enslaving thy fellow citizens, thou thoughtest to become the happiest man in the world; behold, thou art much the better for it! Thou didst despise all my remonstrances, and trample all my laws under thy feet; what reapst thou now from thy tyranny, but the curses of the Athenians, and the just punishments thou art about to endure in the infernal regions.

PISISTRATUS.

But I governed with mildness enough. 'Tis true

I was willing to govern, and to sacrifice whatever was suspicious to my authority.

SOLON.

That is exactly what is called a tyrant. He does not commit evil for the sole delight of committing it; but he sticks at nothing he thinks will encrease his greatness.

PISISTRATUS.

I wanted to acquire glory.

SOLON.

What glory is it to render one's country enslaved, and to pass, to all posterity, for a wicked wretch, who knew neither justice, honour, nor humanity? Thou shouldst have acquired glory, like so many other Greeks, in the service of thy country, and not by oppressing it as thou hast done.

PISISTRATUS.

But when one has spirit, genius, and eloquence enough to govern, it is very hard to spend one's days in a state of dependence upon a capricious people.

SOLON.

I grant it; but one should endeavour to manage the people justly by the authority of the laws. I who speak to thee was, thou well knowest, of the royal race; but was I at any time ambitious to govern Athens? On the contrary, I sacrificed every thing to put salutary laws in force: I lived poor: I never would make use of any thing but persuasion and good-example, which are the arms of virtue. Say, did you act in this manner?

PISISTRATUS.

No; but the reason was, I intended to leave the royalty to my children.

SOLON.

And well thou hast succeeded! for all the inheritance thou hast left them is the public hatred and detestation. The most generous citizens have deserved an immortal glory and statues for stabbing the one; the other, a fugitive, is gone servilely to a savage king, to beg his aid against his own native country. Such are the possessions thou hast left thy children! Hadst thou left them the love of their country, and a contempt of pageantry, they had still been living happy among the Athenians.

PISISTRATUS.

But what! live without glory, in obscurity?

SOLON.

Is glory acquired only by crimes? It is to be sought in war against enemies, in all the virtues of a good citizen, in the contempt of every thing that intoxicates and enervates men. O Pisistratus, glory is a noble thing! Blessed they who know how to find it! but how pernicious is it to propose finding it where it is not!

PISISTRATUS.

But the people had too much liberty; and a people too free is the most insupportable of all tyrants.

SOLON.

Thou shouldst have assisted me, to moderate the liberty of the people, by establishing my laws; and not have overturned the laws to tyrannize over the people. Thou hast acted like a father, who, to render his son moderate and tractable, should sell him into slavery for the remainder of his life.

PISISTRATUS.

But, the people of Athens are too jealous of their liberty.

SOLON.

It is true they are jealous to excess of a liberty that belongs to them; but wert not thou still more jealous of a tyranny which could not possibly belong to thee?

PISISTRATUS.

I had not patience to see the people at the mercy of the sophists and rhetoricians, who prevailed over persons of wisdom and discretion.

SOLON.

It was still better that the sophists and rhetoricians should sometimes impose on the people by their argumentations and eloquence, than to see thee stop the mouths of both good and bad counsellors, in order to crush the people, and hear nothing but thy own passions. But what delight didst thou taste in that power? What can be the charm of tyranny?

PISISTRATUS.

Why, it is, to be dreaded by every-body, to fear no-body, and to be able to do any thing.

SOLON.

Fool, thou hadst every thing to fear, and that thou didst experience, when thou didst fall from the summit of thy fortune, and hadst so much ado to rise again. Thou findest it also in thy children. Who was it had most to fear, thou or the Athenians? Whether the Athenians, who groaned under the yoke of slavery detested thee, or thou, who wert always to fear being betrayed, dispossessed, and punished for thy usurpation? Thou hadst therefore more to dread than the very captive people, to whom thou didst render thyself so formidable.

PISISTRATUS.

I ingenuously confess that tyranny gave me no real delight; but I should never have had the cou-

rage to part with it : by losing the authority I should have fallen into a mortal languor.

SOLON.

Acknowledge then how hurtful tyranny is to the tyrant, as well as to the people : he is unhappy in the possession, and miserable in being deprived of it.



DIALOGUE XII.

SOLON AND JUSTINIAN.

A just idea of the laws fit to render a people good and happy.

JUSTINIAN.

THERE is nothing like the majesty of the Roman laws. You were thought by the Greeks to be a great law-giver : but had you lived amongst us, your glory would have been much eclipsed.

SOLON.

Why would I have been despised in your country?

JUSTINIAN.

Why ! because the Romans have vastly improved upon the Greeks, both for the number and perfection of their laws.

SOLON.

Wherein, pray, have they improved ?

JUSTINIAN.

We have a vast number of admirable laws, which have been made at various times. I shall in all 2-

ges have the glory of having compiled in my code all that great body of laws.

SOLON.

I have often heard Cicero say here below, that the laws of the twelve tables were the most perfect the Romans ever had. You'll give me leave to observe by the way, that these laws travelled from Greece to Rome, and that they came chiefly from Lacedemon.

JUSTINIAN.

Let them come from whence you please, they were too simple, and too short, to be compared with our laws, which have foreseen every thing, determined every thing, put every thing in order with an infinite particularity.

SOLON.

For my part, I thought that laws, in order to be good, were to be clear, plain, concise, adapted to a whole people, who are to understand them, to retain them easily, to love them, to obey them upon all occasions, and at all times.

JUSTINIAN.

But plain and concise laws do by no means afford sufficient exercise for the learning and genius of the lawyer; they don't descend enough into curious questions.

SOLON.

I must own it seemed to me, that laws were made on purpose to avoid knotty questions, and to preserve amongst a people good morals, order and tranquillity: but you inform me, that they ought to give exercise to subtle wits, and to furnish out matter of pleading.

JUSTINIAN.

Rome has produced learned lawyers: Sparta had nothing but ignorant foldiers.

SOLON.

I should have taken good laws to be such as prevent any need for lawyers, and enable all the ignorant to live in peace under the protection of those plain and clear laws, without being reduced to the necessity of consulting vain sophisters about the sense of different texts, and the manner of reconciling them. I should imagine laws not very good, when they require so many learned men to explain them, and who are never agreed amongst themselves.

JUSTINIAN.

In order to set every thing to rights, I made my compilation.

SOLON.

It was but yesterday that Tribonian told me that it was he who made it.

JUSTINIAN.

'Tis very true: but he did it by my directions: it does not belong to an emperor to perform such a work himself.

SOLON.

I, for my part, who have reigned, imagined that the principal office of a people's governor was, to give them laws which should rule at the same time both the king and the people, in order to make them good and happy. To command armies, to obtain victories, is not to be compared with the glory of a lawgiver. But to return to your Tribonian: he hath made a compilation of occasional laws, which have frequently varied; and you never had a true body of laws all made together, upon one uniform plan, to form the manners and whole government.

of a kingdom : it is a collection of particular laws for deciding upon the reciprocal pretensions of individuals ; but the Greeks alone have the glory of having made fundamental laws for conducting a people on philosophical principles, and regulating its whole policy and government. As for the large number of your laws, which you so much boast of, 'tis that makes me believe, you either have never had good ones, or that you have not known how to preserve them in their simplicity. For the right governing of a people, there need but few judges, and few laws : there are few men fit to be judges ; the multitude of judges corrupts every thing : the multitude of laws is no less hurtful ; they come to be no longer understood, no longer kept : when once there are so many, men grow accustomed to reverence them in appearance, and to break them under specious pretexts. Vanity causes them to be made with solemn pomp : avarice and the other passions cause them to be despised. People sport with them through the subtlety of the sophists, who explain them as every one requires for his money. Hence arises chicane, a monster born to devour mankind. I judge of causes by their effects. Laws appear to me good only in the countries where there is no pleading, and where simple and concise laws have avoided all questions. I would have neither dispositions by will, nor adoptions, nor disinherittings, nor entails, nor borrowings, nor sellings, nor exchanges. I would have but a very narrow tract of land in each family ; this estate to be unalienable, and the magistrate to divide it equally amongst the children, according to the law, after the death of the father. When families should multiply too

fast in proportion to the extent of lands, I would send off a part of the people to make a colony in some desert country. For this one short and simple rule, I would willingly dispense with all your trash of laws, and turn my thoughts wholly towards regulating the manners, towards training up the youth to sobriety, labour, patience; to the contempt of effeminacy, to fortitude against pain and against death. This were better than subtilizing upon contracts and guardianships.

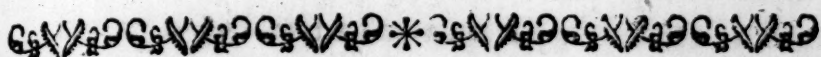
JUSTINIAN.

By such laws you would quite destroy all that is ingenious in jurisprudence.

SOLON.

I like plain, harsh, and unpolished laws better, than an ingenious art of disturbing the peace of mankind, and sapping the foundation of morals. There never was such a number of laws at any time as in your's; never was your empire so soft, so effeminate, so degenerate, so unworthy of the antient Romans, who bore some resemblance to the Spartans. You were yourself but a roguish, wicked villain, a destroyer of good laws, a compound of vanity and deceit; and your Tribonian was as wicked, as double and as dissolute. Procopius unmasked you. But to return to laws: they are laws only so far as they are easily conceived, confided in, beloved, obeyed; and are good only so far as their execution renders the people good and happy. You made none either good or happy by your famous compilation: whence I conclude, that it deserves to be burned. I observe you angry: imperial majesty thinks itself above truth; but its shade is no more than a shadow, to which one may tell truth without fear of being punished: nevertheless,

to make you quiet, and appease your rage, I will withdraw.



DIALOGUE XIII.

DEMOCRITUS AND HERACLITUS.

A comparison between Democritus and Heraclitus, wherein the latter is preferred, being the more humane.

DEMOCRITUS.

I Can never be reconciled to a melancholy philosophy.

HERACLITUS.

Nor I, to a merry one. When a man is wise, he sees nothing in the world but what is preposterous, and displeasing.

DEMOCRITUS.

You take things in too great earnest, and that hurts you.

HERACLITUS.

You take them in too great jest: your fleeing air is rather that of a satyr than of a philosopher. Does it not move you to see mankind so blind, so corrupt, gone so astray?

DEMOCRITUS.

I am much more moved to see them so impertinent and so foolish.

HERACLITUS.

But after all, that mankind you laugh at, is the whole world with which you live; 'tis the society of your friends, 'tis your family, 'tis yourself.

DEMOCRITUS.

I care very little for all the fools I see, and reckon myself very wise in laughing at them.

HERACLITUS.

If they are fools, you are neither very wise nor good-natured, instead of pitying them to insult their ignorance : besides, how are you certain that you are not as extravagant as they?

DEMOCRITUS.

That I cannot be, thinking in all things the quite contrary to what they think.

HERACLITUS.

There are different sorts of follies. By so constantly contradicting the follies of others you possibly run into the opposite extreme, which is no less ridiculous.

DEMOCRITUS.

Imagine what you please, and weep over me too, if you have any tears to spare. For my part I am content with laughing at fools. Are not all men so too?

HERACLITUS.

Alas ! they are but too much so, and that is what grieves me : you and I agree in this point, that men do not follow reason : but I, who will not do as they do, will follow reason, which forces me to love them ; and that love fills me with compassion for their errors. Am I to blame for pitying my own species, my brethren, what is in a manner a part of myself? Should you chance to go into an hospital of wounded persons, would their wounds make you merry? Now the sores of the body are nothing in comparison of those of the mind : sure you would be ashamed of your barbarity, had you laughed at a poor wretch maimed of a leg ; and yet you are

so inhuman as to make a jest of the whole world, who have lost their reason.

DEMOCRITUS.

He who has lost a leg is to be pitied, as he himself did not deprive him of that member: but he who loses reason, loses it through his own fault.

HERACLITUS.

Ah! so much the more to be pitied! A furious madman who should pluck out his own eyes, would deserve compassion more than an ordinary blind man.

DEMOCRITUS.

Come, let us make up the matter; there is room to justify us both: there is every where reason to laugh, and reason to weep. The world is ridiculous, and I laugh at it: it is deplorable, and you cry at it. Every one considers it in his own way, and according to his own temper: one thing certain is, that the world is preposterous; to act well, to think right, one must act, one must think differently with numbers: to go by the authority and example of the greatest part of mankind, is the lot of fools.

HERACLITUS.

All that is true: but you love nothing, and the calamities of others make you merry; which is neither to love men, nor the virtues they forsake.



D I A L O G U E XIV.

HERODOTUS AND LUCIAN.

Too great a credulity is an excess to be avoided: but that of incredulity is of far more fatal tendency.

HERODOTUS.

HAH! good-morrow, my friend: thou art no longer in a laughing humour, thou who hast made so many celebrated men converse together in their passing over in Charon's boat; so thou art even come down to the Stygian banks in thy turn. Thou hadst reason to play upon tyrants, flatterers, miscreants, but not upon me.

LUCIAN.

When did ever I play upon thee? Thou wastest to quarrel with me.

HERODOTUS.

In thy true history, and elsewhere, thou takest my relations for fables.

LUCIAN.

And was I, pray, to blame? How many things didst thou advance upon the authority of priests and other people, who deal always in mysteries and wonders?

HERODOTUS.

Impious wretch! thou didst not believe religion.

LUCIAN.

There would have needed a purer and more serious religion than that of Jupiter and Venus, of Mars, Apollo, and the other deities, to persuade

persons of good sense: and the more shame for thee to have believed it.

HERODOTUS.

But thou didst no less despise philosophy. Nothing was sacred to thee.

LUCIAN.

I hated the gods, because the poets painted them out to us as the most foolish people in the world. As for the philosophers, they pretended to esteem nothing but virtue, and at the same time were full of vices; had they been really philosophers, I would have honoured them.

HERODOTUS.

But how didst thou treat even Socrates himself? Was it his fault or thine?—Speak.

LUCIAN.

'Tis true I drolled a little upon the things he was accused of: but I never condemned him seriously.

HERODOTUS.

Should any one make sport at the expence of so great a man, and that upon gross calumnies? But say the truth, thy sole aim was to laugh, to jeer, at every thing, to shew somewhat ridiculous in every particular, without troubling thy head to establish any thing solidly.

LUCIAN.

How! did I not lash the vices? Did not I fulminate against the great that abuse their greatness? Did not I extol to the skies the contempt of riches and of pleasures?

HERODOTUS.

'Tis true, thou didst speak well of virtue; but to censure the vices of all mankind was rather a strain of satyr, than a sentiment of sound philosophy. Thou didst even praise virtue, but without caring to trace

it back to the principles of religion and philosophy, which are its real foundations.

LUCIAN.

Thou reasonest better here below than thou didst in thy great travels. But come let us be friends. I was not credulous enough, and thou wert too much so.

HERODOTUS.

Ah! thou art still the old man, turning every thing into pleasantry. Were it not full time that thy shade had a little gravity?

LUCIAN.

Gravity! I am sick of it, I have seen so much of it. I was surrounded with a parcel of philosophers who piqued themselves upon it, without either truth, justice, friendship, moderation or modesty.

HERODOTUS.

Thou talkest of the philosophers of thy time, who had degenerated; but——

LUCIAN.

But what? Wouldst thou have me to have seen those who were dead several centuries before I was born? I had no remembrance of having been at the siege of Troy, like Pythagoras. Every body cannot have been Euphorbus.

HERODOTUS.

The other jeer! and such are thy answers to the most solid arguments. I wish, for thy punishment, that the gods, in whom thou wouldst not believe, may send thee into the body of some traveller, who shall make a tour through all the countries of which I have related things thou looked upon as fabulous.

LUCIAN.

After that, I should want no more but to pass from body to body through all the different sects of philosophers which I have decried; and so I should be one after another of all the contrary opinions which I have derided. That would be mighty pretty : but thou hast said things very near as credible.

HERODOTUS.

Away : I abandon thee, and comfort myself with the thoughts that I am in company with Homer, Socrates, and Pythagoras, whom thou hast no more spared than myself; and with Plato too, from whom thou learnedst the art of dialogue, although thou madest a jest of his philosophy.



DIALOGUE XV.

SOCRATES AND ALCIBIADES.

The greatest natural qualities often serve to be a dishonour, if they are not supported by a constant love of virtue.

SOCRATES.

SO! thou art still the same agreeable person ! Whom shalt thou find to delight in these dark mansions ?

ALCIBIADES.

And thou art still the same censor of mankind ! Whom shalt thou find to persuade here, thou who wilt ever be persuading of somebody ?

SOCRATES.

I have been discouraged from attempting to persuade men, since I have found how ill my discourses succeeded in persuading thee to virtue.

ALCIBIADES.

Wouldst thou have had me live poor and mean like thee, without interfering with public affairs?

SOCRATES.

Whether was it better not to interfere in them, or to embroil them, and become the enemy of one's country?

ALCIBIADES.

I like my character better than thine. I was beautiful, magnificent, full of glory, and living in the midst of pleasures, became the terror of the Lacedemonians and Persians. The Athenians could not save their city, but by calling me back: and had they taken my counsel, Lyfander had never entered their harbour. As for thee, thou wert but a poor, homely, flat-nosed, bald creature, who spentest thy whole life in descanting, and finding fault with men in every thing they do. Aristophanes played thee off upon the stage; thou wert reckoned a profane wretch, and so wert put to death.

SOCRATES.

Thou huddlest a great number of things together: let us examine them a little separately. Thou wast beautiful, but infamous for the shameful uses thou madest of thy beauty: sensual delights occupied thy noble disposition. Thou hast rendered great services to thy country; but thou hast also done it great mischiefs: in both the good and bad offices thou didst it, it was a vain presumption that actuated thee, and consequently no real glory can spring to thee from them. The enemies of Greece, to whom

thou hadst devoted thyself, could not trust thee, nor thou them. Would it not have been more glorious to have lived poor in thy native country, and there to have suffered patiently whatever barbarous men commonly do to oppress virtue? It was better to be homely and wise like me, than handsome and dissolute as thou wast. The only thing I can be reproached with, is, my having loved thee too much, and suffered myself to be blinded by so fickle a temper as thine. Thy vices dishonoured the philosophical education Socrates had bestowed upon thee. There lay my fault.

ALCIBIADES.

But thy death shews thou wert an impious person.

SOCRATES.

The impious are such as broke down the Mercuries! I had rather have swallowed poison for teaching the truth, and provoked men, who are not able to bear it, than met death, like thee, in the arms of a courtesan.

ALCIBIADES.

Thy raillery was always keen.

SOCRATES.

Who could suffer a man that was fit for doing so many good things, and did so many bad ones? Thou comest again to insult virtue.

ALCIBIADES.

How now! the ghost of Socrates and virtue, it seems, are the same thing? Thou dost not want presumption——

SOCRATES.

Reckon Socrates as nothing, if thou chusest; I give thee full liberty. But after beguiling my hopes of the virtue I endeavoured to instil into thee,

come not also to make a mock of philosophy, and to boast all thy actions to me: they had some lustre, but no rule. Thou hast no manner of reason to laugh; death has made thee as homely and flat-nosed as myself; what of thy pleasures now remain to thee?

ALCIBIADES.

Ah! nothing but the shame and remorse. But whither art thou going? Wherefore wilt thou quit me?

SOCRATES.

Farewel. As I did not follow thee in thy ambitious expeditions into Sicily, Sparta, or Asia, thou hast no title to follow me into the Elysian fields, whither I go to lead a quiet and blessed life with Solon, Lycurgus, and the other philosophers.

ALCIBIADES.

Ah! my dear Socrates, must I be separated from thee? Alas! whither shall I go then?

SOCRATES.

Along with those weak and vain souls, whose life has been a continual medley of good and evil, and who have never loved pure virtue for any continuance. Thou wast born to follow virtue; thou hast preferred thy passions: now she forsakes thee in her turn, and thou shalt regret her for ever.

ALCIBIADES.

Alas! my dear Socrates, thou that didst so love me, wilt thou never more take any pity on me? Thou canst not disown, for thou knowest it better than another, that my disposition was good at bottom.

SOCRATES.

That is what renders thee more inexcusable: nature was very kind to thee, and thou hast abused her

kindness. My love for thee, like thy noble disposition, has served but to increase thy condemnation; I esteemed thee for thy virtue; but at length I loved thee to the hazarding my own reputation. I suffered for thy sake the being unjustly suspected of monstrous vices which I condemned in the whole of my doctrine: to thee I sacrificed my life as well as my honour. Hast thou forgot the expedition of Potidea, in which I quartered always with thee? A father cannot stick closer to his son than I did to thee: in all skirmishes I was ever by thy side. One day the fight proving doubtful, thou wast wounded; immediately I rushed in before thee, to cover thee with my body, as with a shield: I saved thy life, thy liberty, thy arms: the crown was due to me for that action; but I desired the chiefs to give it thee. I had a passion for nothing but thy glory. I should never have believed thou could become the shame of thy country, and the source of all its calamities.

ALCIBIADES.

I imagine, my dear Socrates, thou hast not forgot too that other occasion, when our troops having been routed, thou wert retreating on foot with no small difficulty, and I happening to come up on horseback, stopped and beat back thy enemies, who were about to overwhelm thee. So let us balance accounts.

SOCRATES.

With all my heart. But if I call to mind what I have done for thee, it is by no means to upbraid thee with it, or to praise myself; 'tis only to shew what care I took to make thee good, and how ill thou hast answered my trouble.

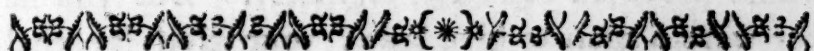
ALCIBIADES.

Thou hast nothing to say against my younger years. As I listened to thy instructions, I would frequently melt into tears. If I sometimes eloped from thee, when drawn away by company, thou didst hunt after me, as a master after his runaway slave; never did I presume to resist thee; I gave ear to none but thee; I feared nothing but thy displeasure.

'Tis true, I laid a wager one day to give Hipponicus a box on the ear: I accordingly gave it him; and then went to beg his pardon, and strip myself before him, that he might punish me with rods: but he forgave me, finding I had displeased him only through the levity of my sprightly and gamefome disposition.

SOCRATES.

Then thou hadst committed but the fault of a young fool; but afterwards thou didst commit the crimes of a villain, who regards not the gods, who makes a mock of virtue and honour, who lays his country in ashes to gratify his ambition, who carries dissolute manners into foreign countries. Begone, thou movest at once my horror and compassion. Thou wast framed for being good, and hast chosen to be bad: for which I am inconsolable. We must part. The three judges will decide thy fate: but we can be no longer united in these infernal regions.



DIALOGUE XVI.

SOCRATES AND ALCIBIADES.

Good government is that wherein the citizens are brought up in a reverence of the laws, a love of their country, and of men, which is the great country.

SOCRATES.

WELL, you are become wondrous wise at your own expence, as well as at the expence of all those whom you have deceived. You might have been the worthy hero of another Odysey; for you have seen the customs of more nations in your travels, than Ulysses ever did in his.

ALCIBIADES.

It is not experience I want, but wisdom; and tho' you jeer me, you cannot but confess a man learns abundance of things when he travels, and studies seriously the customs and manners of so many nations.

SOCRATES.

It is true that such a study, were it rightly performed, might greatly improve the mind: but it would require a true philosopher, a person of sedateness and application, not swayed by ambition and pleasure as you were; one free from passion and prejudice, who should investigate what were good in every people, and discover wherein the laws of each country have been profitable or hurtful to it. Upon returning from his travels, such a philosopher

would prove an excellent legislator. But you never were a man to give laws; your talent lay wholly in breaking them: You were but a boy when you advised your uncle Pericles to commence a war, in order to avoid giving account of the public money; nay, I believe that even after your death, you would be but a dangerous keeper of the laws.

A L C I B I A D E S.

Let me alone, I beseech you: the river of forgetfulness ought to drown all my faults. Let us talk of the manners of nations: wherever I went, I found only customs, and but very few laws. All the savages have no other rule than the use and example of their fathers. The Persians themselves, whose manners in the time of Cyrus have been so much boasted, retain not the least trace of true virtue: their valour and magnificence speak a pretty good natural disposition; but it is corrupted by effeminacy and the grossest pride. Their kings, worshipped like idols, can never be honest men, nor come to the knowledge of the truth; humanity cannot bear with moderation so inordinate a power as theirs: they imagine every thing made for them; and so sport with the property, the honour, and the life of all the rest of mankind. Nothing betrays more barbarousness than such a form of government; for there are no longer any laws, and the will of one man, whose passions are every one flattered, is the sole law.

S O C R A T E S.

That country could not be very pleasing to so free and bold a spirit as yours: but do not you think the liberty of Athens in another extreme?

A L C I B I A D E S.

The Spartan constitution is the best I have seen.

SOCRATES.

Does not the slavery of the Helotes appear contrary to humanity? Go back boldly to true principles. Divest yourself of all prejudice; and confess, that in this particular, the Greeks are themselves somewhat barbarous. Is it lawful for one part of the human species to treat another like beasts of burden?

ALCIBIADES.

Why not, if they be a vanquished people?

SOCRATES.

A vanquished people is still a people; the right of conquest is a right less powerful than that of humanity. What is called conquest becomes the height of tyranny, and the execration of mankind, unless the conqueror has made his conquest by a just war, and rendered the conquered people happy, by giving them salutary laws. It is therefore unlawful for the Lacedemonians so inhumanly to treat the Helotes, who are men as well as themselves. What shocking cruelty, for one people to make nothing of the life and peace of another! As the head of a family ought never to be so fond of aggrandizing his house, as to disturb the public peace and tranquillity of the whole nation, whereof he and his family are but a member; so it is a mad, brutal, and pernicious conduct for the sovereign of a kingdom to place his glory in increasing the power of his people, by disturbing the quiet and liberty of the neighbouring nations. A people is no less a member of mankind, which is the general society, than a family is a member of a particular nation. Every one owes incomparably more to mankind, which is his great country, than to the particular country where he happens to be born: it is there-

fore infinitely more pernicious to violate justice between people and people, than to violate it between family and family, to the detriment of one's commonwealth. To renounce a sense of humanity, is not only to want politeness, and to fall into barbarousness; but it is the most unnatural blindness of robbers and savages: it is to be no longer a man, but a Cannibal.

A L C I B I A D E S.

How angry you grow! methinks you were better humoured in the world: your keen ironies used to have somewhat pleasanter in them.

S O C R A T E S.

I cannot be pleasant upon so serious subjects. The Lacedemonians have abandoned all the peaceful arts, in order to keep and cultivate only that of war; and as war is the greatest of miseries, they know only how to do evil; they value themselves upon it; they hate every thing that is not the destruction of mankind, and that cannot conduce to the brutal glory of an handful of men called Spartans. Others must till the ground for their livelihood, whilst they reserve themselves to ravage the lands of their neighbours. They are not sober and severe upon themselves, in order to be just and moderate towards others. On the contrary, they are hard-hearted and fierce against whatever is not their native country, as if human nature were not more their native country than Sparta. War is an evil that dishonours mankind: could all histories be forever forgotten, it ought to be concealed from posterity, that men have been capable of killing men. All wars are civil ones; for it is still man spilling his own blood, tearing out his own bowels: the more extensive war is, it is the more fatal; therefore that

of nations, which compose mankind, is yet worse than that of families which disturb a people. It is not lawful then to make war, but when it cannot be avoided, and at the last extremity, in order to repel the violence of the enemy. How did not Lycurgus dread to form a people idle and unfit for all the gentle and innocent employments of peace, and to have given no other exercise to their faculties than that of hurting humanity by war?

A L C I B I A D E S.

Your anger warms with reason: but would you rather chuse a people like that of Athens, which refines to the last excess upon the arts devoted to pleasure? One had still better bear with fierce tempers like those of Lacedemon.

How surprizingly are you changed! you are no more that scandalous person. The banks of the Styx make fine alterations; but perhaps you speak thus out of complaisance; for you were all your lifetime a Proteus in behaviour: but be that as it will, I confess that a people, who by a contagion of their manners carry luxury, effeminacy, injustice and deceit into other nations, do still worse than one which has no other employments, no other merit than that of shedding blood; for virtue is more precious to men than life. Lycurgus is therefore commendable for having banished out of his commonwealth all the arts that are subservient only to pride and pleasure: but is inexcusable for having taken away agriculture, and the other arts necessary to a simple and frugal life. Is it not scandalous that a people should not be sufficient for itself, and should want another people given to agriculture to provide it sustenance.

ALCIBIADES.

Well, I stand condemned upon that head: but do not you love the strict discipline of Sparta, and the inviolable subordination which there subjects the youth to the aged, better than the uncurbed wisdom of Athens?

SOCRATES.

A people spoiled by an extensive liberty is the most insupportable of all tyrants; so the populace risen against the laws proves the most insolent of all masters. But there should be a medium. Now this medium is, that a people have written laws, ever standing and consecrated by the whole nation; that they be above every thing; that those who govern derive their authority solely from them; that they have all power to do good, and according to the laws; and that they have no power against those laws to authorize evil: this is what mankind, were they not blind and enemies to themselves, would unanimously establish for their common felicity. But some, like the Athenians, overturn the laws, for fear of giving too much authority to the magistrates, by whom the laws ought to reign; and others, like the Persians, out of a superstitious veneration for the laws, become such abject slaves to those who ought to make the laws reign, that these men reign themselves; nor is there any other real law than their absolute will and pleasure. Thus both shoot wide of the mark, which is a liberty, moderated by the sole authority of the laws, whereof those who govern ought to be nothing but the bare defenders. He who governs should be the most obedient to the law: this person, distinct from the law, is nothing; and is sacred only so far as he is himself, without interest and without passion, the

living law given for the good of men. By this you may judge how far the Grecians, who so greatly condemn the Barbarians, are still in barbarity themselves. The Peloponnesian war, in which the ambitious jealousy of two republics made a general combustion for eight and twenty years, is a fatal proof of it. Did not you yourself, who are here speaking, flatter sometimes the gloomy and implacable ambition of the Lacedemonians; sometimes the vainer and more sprightly ambition of the Athenians? Athens, with less power, made greater efforts, and triumphed a long time over all Greece; but at last she fell all at once, the despotism of the people being a furious and blind power, which rages against itself, which is absolute and above the laws, only to complete its own destruction.

ALCIBIADES.

I find Avitus was not in the wrong to order you a dose of hemlock; and that your politics were yet more to be dreaded than your new religion.



DIALOGUE XVII.

SOCRATES, ALCIBIADES, AND
TIMON.

*The just mean between misanthropy and the corrupt
character of Alcibiades.*

ALCIBIADES.

TO see you, my dear Socrates, have such a liking for that misanthrope, who is a very bugbear to little children, greatly astonishes me.

SOCRATES.

You should be much more astonished at his growing familiar with me.

TIMON.

They have accused me of hating men, and indeed I do not deny it. Let any one but behold what make they are of, and then judge if I be in the wrong. To hate mankind is to hate an evil beast, a multitude of fools, rogues, flatterers, traitors, and ungrateful wretches.

ALCIBIADES.

A fine catalogue of words upon my word! But what better is it to be fierce, disdainful, unfociable, and continually snarling? For my part, I find that fools make me merry, and men of sense give me satisfaction. I desire to please them in my turn, and can relish any thing in order to be agreeable in society.

TIMON.

As for my part I relish nothing; every thing displeases me, every thing is false, preposterous and insupportable: every thing vexes me, and raises my aversion. You are a Proteus, who assumes indifferently all, even the most opposite shapes, because you keep to none. These metamorphoses, which cost you nothing, speak a heart void of principles either of justice or truth. Virtue, with you, is but a specious name, nor is there any fixed. What you approve at Athens you condemn at Lacedemon. In Greece you are a Greek, in Asia a Persian: and neither gods, laws, nor country can restrain you. You follow but one rule, which is the passion of pleasing, of dazzling, of domineering, of living amidst delights, and of embroiling states. O heavens! that such a man should be suffered up-

on earth, and other men not be ashamed of admiring him! Alcibiades is beloved of men, Alcibiades who makes sport of them, and by his crimes involves them in so many misfortunes. For my part, I hate Alcibiades, and all the fools that love him, and should be very sorry to be loved by them, since they can love nothing but evil.

ALCIBIADES.

A very obliging declaration truly! However, I do not in the least take it ill. You place me at the head of all mankind, and so do me a great deal of honour. My side is rather stronger than yours; but you have a good heart, and do not fear to stand single against us all.

TIMON.

I should abhor not to stand single, when I see the meanness, the cowardice, the levity, the corruption and pollution of all the men that cover the face of the earth.

ALCIBIADES.

Do you except none?

TIMON.

No, not one indeed, and you less than another.

ALCIBIADES.

What! not yourself? Do you hate yourself too?

TIMON.

Yes; I often hate myself, when I catch myself in any weakness.

ALCIBIADES.

You do mighty well, and are only to blame, that you do not do so always. What is there more hateful than a man that has forgot that he is a man; who hates his own nature, who beholds nothing but with abhorrence, and with a savage melancholy, which turns every thing into poison, and renounc-

es all manner of society, tho' man be created only to be sociable?

TIMON.

Give me men simple and upright, full of justice, and every way good, and I'll love them, I'll never forsake them, I'll adore them like deities upon earth. But so long as you shall give me men that are not men; foxes in cunning, and tygers in cruelty; who shall have the face, the body, the human voice, a monster's heart, like the Syrens; humanity itself will make me abhor and fly from them.

ALCIBIADES.

We must then make you men on purpose. Is it not better to suit one's self to men such as one finds them, than to resolve to hate them till they suit themselves to us? With so critical a moroseness, one passes life dismally, despised, derided, deserted, and tastes not any pleasure. For my part, I go entirely by the customs, manners and fancies of each people; I every where make merry, and do any thing with men I chuse: the philosophy which tends only to make a philosopher an owl, is very unfit for practice; one would need in this world a philosophy more condescending and sociable. Honest men are to be gained by virtuous motives; the voluptuous by their pleasures, and knaves by their interest. This is the sole real notion of life; every thing else is vision and melancholy, which should be purged off with a little hellebore.

TIMON.

To talk thus is to annihilate virtue, and to turn good men into ridicule: so contagious a fellow would not be suffered in any well-ordered republic: but alas! where is that republic here below? O my dear Socrates! when shall we see yours? To-mor-

row, yea, to-morrow would I retire to it, were it once begun: but I could wish we went far from all known lands, and founded that blessed colony of pure philosophers in the Atlantic isle.

ALCIBIADES.

Oh! you do not consider that you would carry yourself thither. You should first be reconciled with yourself, with whom you say you are so often at variance.

TIMON.

Laugh at it as you will, nothing is more serious. Yes, I maintain that I often hate myself, and that I have reason to do so. When I find myself softened by pleasures, so far as to bear men's vices, and even on the point of complying with them; when I perceive reviving within me self-interest, voluptuousness, a tenderness for a vain reputation amongst fools and miscreants; then do I imagine myself almost like them, I begin a process against myself, I detest, and cannot bear myself.

ALCIBIADES.

And who afterwards makes your agreement? Do you make it up secretly with yourself without any umpire?

TIMON.

Why, after having condemned myself, I reform and reclaim myself.

ALCIBIADES.

There must then be a good many people in yourself? One corrupted man drawn away by bad example; a second, who reprimands the former; and a third, who makes them friends again, by reclaiming him who was debauched.

TIMON.

Play the fool as much as you please: with you the company is not so numerous; for there is in

your heart but one man, ever pliant and depraved, who disguises himself in an hundred different forms, in order to be always equally capable of doing mischief.

ALCIBIADES.

So there is none upon earth good but yourself nor are you so but in certain periods?

TIMON.

No, I know not any thing good or worthy to be loved.

ALCIBIADES.

If you know not any thing good, any thing that does not shock you, either in others or yourself; if life be entirely disgustful to you, you ought to get rid of it as soon as you can, and take leave of so bad company. Why should you live to be vexed at every thing, and to find fault with every thing from the rising of the sun to its going down? Do you not know that Athens wants neither running cords nor precipices?

TIMON.

I should be tempted to do what you hint, did I not fear to do a pleasure to so many men, who deserve to have none done them.

ALCIBIADES.

But should you have no regret to leave any body? Think well before you speak.

TIMON.

I should have a little regret to leave Socrates; but—

ALCIBIADES.

Hah! do you not know that he is a man?

TIMON.

No, I am not well assured of it: nay, I sometimes doubt of it; for he resembles the rest but little.

He appears to me void of artifice, void of interest, void of ambition : I find him just, sincere, equal. Were there in the world ten men like him, I really believe he would reconcile me with humanity.

ALCIBIADES.

Well then, be advised by him : ask him whether reason permits any one to be a man-hater to the degree you are.

TIMON.

I will; and tho' he hath always been too easy and too sociable, I do not fear to engage to follow his counsel. O my dear Socrates ! When I behold men, and then cast my eyes upon you, I am tempted to think that you are Minerva descended in human shape to instruct her city. Speak honestly, would you advise me to re-enter into the poisoned society of wicked, blind, and deceitful men ?

SOCRATES.

No : I never shall advise you to re-engage yourself in assemblies of the people, or in banquets full of licentiousness, or in any society with a great number of citizens ; for crowds are always corrupt. An honest and peaceable solitude, sheltered from men's passions, and from one's own, is the only situation befitting a real philosopher ; but we are to love men, and to do them good, notwithstanding their failings : we are to expect from them nothing but ingratitude, and to serve them without interest. To live amongst them in order to deceive them, to dazzle them, and to procure from them wherewithal to gratify one's passions, is to be the most wicked of men, and to pave the way for misfortunes deserved. But to keep at a distance, and yet near enough to instruct and serve certain men, is to be a beneficent deity upon earth. The ambition of Alci-

biades is hurtful : but your misanthropy is a weak virtue mixed with a moroseness of temper. Your crabbed and impatient virtue cannot sufficiently bear with the vice of others; 'tis a love of ourselves that makes us grow impatient, when we cannot reform others to the degree we could wish. Philanthropy is a virtue kind, patient, and disinterested; which bears evil without approving it: it waits for men; in nothing indulging its own taste, or its own conveniency: it learns, from the consciousness of its own weakness, to bear with that of others: it is never disappointed by the most deceitful and most ungrateful men; for it neither hopes nor wishes any thing from them for its own interest. It asks nothing of them but for their real good: it never tires in this disinterested goodness: it imitates the Gods, who have given men life, without being needful of their incense or burnt-offerings.

TIMON.

But I do not despise men out of inhumanity; I despise them only because I cannot help it, because they are despicable: 'tis their depravation I hate, and their persons, because they are depraved.

SOCRATES.

Well, I imagine so: but if you hate only the evil in man, why do you not love man, in order to deliver him from that evil, and to make him good? A physician hates the fever, and all the other diseases that torment the bodies of men; but he does by no means hate the diseased. Vices are diseases of the soul; be then a wise and charitable physician, who, far from hating his patient, studies to cure him out of love to him. The world is a great hospital of all mankind, which ought to excite your pity: avarice, ambition, envy and anger, are great-

er and more dangerous sores in minds, than abscesses and ulcers are in bodies. Cure all the patients you can cure, and pity all those that shall prove incurable.

TIMON.

O my dear Socrates, that is a sophism easy to be distinguished. There is a great odds between the vices of the soul and the diseases of the body: diseases are evils suffered, and not done: we are not guilty, we are to be pitied for them. But as for vices, they are voluntary, they render the will culpable: they are not evils suffered, they are evils done: these evils deserve indignation and chastisement, and not compassion.

SOCRATES.

It is true there are two sorts of diseases of men: the one involuntary and innocent, the other voluntary, and which render the patient culpable. But as evil will is the greatest of evils, vice is the most deplorable of all diseases. The wicked man, who makes others suffer, suffers himself from his wickedness, and draws upon his head the punishments which the just Gods owe him: he is therefore more to be pitied than an innocent patient. Innocence is a precious health of the soul; it is a refuge and consolation in the most terrible pains. What! shall you cease to pity a man, because he labours under the most fatal malady, which is evil will? Were his disease but in the foot, or in the hand, you would pity him; and you do not pity him when it has gangrened the bottom of his heart.

TIMON.

Well, I allow that we should pity the wicked, but not love them.

S O C R A T E S.

We should not love them for their wickedness; but we should love them in order to cure them of it. You therefore love man without thinking you do; for compassion is a love which grieves at the harm of the person beloved. Do you know what hinders you from loving the wicked? It is not your virtue, but the imperfection of the virtue that is in you. Imperfect virtue sinks under the weight of the imperfections of others. We also love ourselves too much, to be always able to bear what is contrary to our taste and maxims. Self love will no more be contradicted by vice than by virtue. We are incensed at the ungrateful, because we desire gratitude from a principle of self-love. Perfect virtue detaches a man from himself, and makes him unwearied in bearing the weakness of others. The greater distance we are from vice, the more patient and calm are we in our application to cure it. Imperfect virtue is suspicious, censorious, crabbed, severe and implacable. Virtue which has come the length of aiming at nothing but good, is always equal, kind, affable, compassionate: it is neither surprized nor shocked at any thing; it entirely denies itself, and thinks of nothing but doing good.

T I M O N.

It is easy to say all that, but not so easy to do it.

S O C R A T E S.

O my dear Timon, gross and blind men fancy that you are a misanthrope, because you have carried virtue too far; I again maintain to you, that if you were more virtuous, you would do as I tell you: you would suffer yourself to be carried away, neither by your savage humour, nor by your melancholy of temper, nor yet by your disgusts, nor by

the impatience men's failings occasion you. 'Tis through loving yourself too much, that you can no longer love other imperfect men. If you were perfect, you would, like the immortals, easily forgive men for being imperfect. Why not suffer meekly what the Gods, who are so much better than you, suffer. That delicacy which makes you so easily offended, is a real imperfection. Reason, that can put up with none but reasonable things, tho' it fire only against what is false, is but a sort of half reason. Perfect reason goes farther: it peaceably bears the unreasonableness of others: such is the principle of compassionate and self denied virtue, which is the true bond of society.

ALCIBIADES.

Indeed, Timon, you are finely confuted with your surly, censorious virtue: 'tis to love one's self too much, to chuse to live all alone solely for one's self, and not to be able to suffer the least thing that clashes with one's own sentiments. When a person does not love himself so much, he freely gives up himself to others.

SOCRATES.

Stop, if you please, Alcibiades, you might easily misapply what I have been saying. There are two ways of giving up one's self to men: the first is, to get one's self beloved, not in order to be their idol, but to employ their confidence towards making them good. This philanthropy is all divine: there is another, which is a counterfeit coin; when we give up ourselves to men, in order to please them, to dazzle them, to usurp authority over them by flattering them; it is not them we love, but ourselves; we then act only through vanity and interest; we pretend to give up ourselves to others, in

order to possess them. Such a false man-lover is like an angler who throws a baited hook; he appears to feed the fishes, but catches them, and kills them. All tyrants, magistrates, and politicians, who have ambition, appear beneficent and generous; they seem to give up themselves, and at the same time want to catch the people: they throw the hook in entertainments, in private parties, in public assemblies. They are not sociable for the interest of men, but in order to ensnare them. They have a flattering, insinuating, cunning wit, to corrupt the manners, like courtezans, and to bring into slavery all they have occasion for. The best things when corrupted become the worst. Such men are the bane of mankind. The self-love of a misanthrope is but sayage and useles to the world; but that of those false man-lovers is treacherous and tyrannical. They promise all the social virtues, and make of society but a trade, in which they want to draw every thing to themselves, and to enslave all the citizens. The man-hater causes more fear and less mischief. A serpent which slides among the flowers is more to be dreaded than a savage beast that runs towards his hole the moment he perceives you.

A L C I B I A D E S.

Timon, let us withdraw; we have had enough of it, and have each of us got a good lesson; let him profit by it that can; but I fancy we shall profit little by it. You will still be furious against all mankind, and I shall go again and be a Proteus between the king of Persia and the Greeks.



DIALOGUE XIX.

ALCIBIADES AND PERICLES.

Without virtue, the greatest talents are reckoned as nothing after death.

PERICLES.

MY dear nephew, I am rejoiced to see thee again. I have always an affection for thee.

ALCIBIADES.

That thou didst sufficiently shew from my very infancy: but I never was so needful of thy assistance as I am at present. Socrates, whom I met with just now, has made me apprehend somewhat from the three Judges, before whom I am about to appear.

PERICLES.

Alas! my dear nephew, we are now no longer at Athens: those three inexorable old fellows pay no regard to eloquence: I myself have felt their rigour; and I foresee that thou wilt not be free from it.

ALCIBIADES.

What, is there no way of gaining those same three personages? Are they insensible to flattery, to pity, to the graces of oratory, to poetry, to music, to subtle arguments, to the recital of noble exploits?

PERICLES.

Thou well knowest, that if eloquence had here any power, without vanity, my chance should have been as good as another's: but nothing is to be gained here by speaking. Those flattering touch-

es that delighted the Athenians; those convincing turns, those insinuating ways that lay hold of men by their advantages and passions, are not of the least use here. The ears are stopt, and the hearts of iron. I who died in the woful Peloponnesian war, am nevertheless punished for it. I might well have been forgiven a fault which cost me my life, and indeed it was you who were the occasion of committing it.

ALCIBIADES.

It is true, I counsell'd thee to commence a war rather than give an account: but is not that the way of the world? When a man governs a state, he looks at home, and consults his own convenience, his own reputation, his own interest, in the first place, let the public go as it may: else who would be the fool to give himself the trouble of governing, of watching night and day in order to make others sleep soundly? Do your judges here count this amiss?

PERICLES.

Ay, so much amiss, that after dying of the plague in that cursed war, wherein I lost the confidence of the people, I have here suffered great tortures for disturbing the peace unseasonably. By this thou mayst judge, my poor nephew, whether thou shalt come off any easier.

ALCIBIADES.

This is ill news indeed. The living, when much vexed at any thing, are apt to say, I wish I were dead: I, on the contrary, can heartily say, I wish I were alive and well again!

PERICLES.

Oh! thou no longer stalkest in that gay, trailing purple robe, wherewith thou didst charm all the A-

thenian and Spartan ladies. Thou wilt be punished, not only for what thou hast done thyself, but also for what thou didst advise me to do.



DIALOGUE XIX.

ACIBIADES, MERCURY, AND
CHARON.

*Character of a young prince corrupted by ambition
and the love of pleasure.*

CHARON.

WHO is it thou bringest there? He looks wondrous big: what has he got more than another to be so very proud of?

MERCURY.

He was beautiful, well-made, valiant, eloquent, fit to charm all the world. Never was man so pliant. Proteus-like, he would assume all kinds of shapes. At Athens, he was delicate, learned, and polite; at Sparta, rough, austere and laborious; in Asia, effeminate, soft, and magnificent like the Persians. In Thrace he was ever on horseback, and drank like Silenus: and thus hath he embroiled and overturned every thing in all the kingdoms he has passed through.

CHARON.

But will he not also overturn my boat, which is old, thou knowest, and leaky? What hadst thou to do with such a bargain? Thou hadst better leave him among the living; he would have occasioned wars, slaughters, desolations, which would have sent us

numbers of ghosts; as for his own, it frightens me: What do they call him?

MERCURY.

Alcibiades. Didst thou never hear of him?

CHARON.

Alcibiades! every ghost that comes deafens me with him: he has given me a good deal of trouble with all those he hath been the death of in so many wars. Is it not he, who having fled to Sparta after the impieties he had committed at Athens, debauched the wife of king Agis?

MERCURY.

The very same.

CHARON.

I am afraid he will do the like with Proserpine. For he is genteeler and more engaging than our king Pluto. But Pluto is not to be jested with.

MERCURY.

I deliver him up to thee such as he is: if he make as great an uproar in Pluto's regions, as he has done all his life upon earth, this will no longer be the kingdom of silence. But question him a little how he will behave. Hark ye, Alcibiades, tell Charon how thou intendest to behave here below.

ALCIBIADES.

Behave! why I intend to carry fair with every body, to advise Charon to double his fare, Pluto to make war upon Jupiter, in order to be chief of the gods, seeing Jove governs men so badly, and the empire of the dead is more extensive than that of the living. What has he to do above yonder in his Olympus, when he lets every thing on earth go at random? It is far better to acknowledge, as sovereign of deities, him who punishes crimes here be-

low, and corrects whatever his brother through his indolence has suffered to go out of order. As for Proserpine, I shall tell her tidings of Sicily, which she was so fond of; I, with my lyre, shall chant the songs made there in honour of her; I shall talk to her of the nymphs with whom she was gathering flowers, when Pluto came and run away with her; I shall likewise tell her all my adventures; and it will be strange ill luck if I do not please her.

MERCURY.

Thou wilt govern all^{le} hell, I'll engage for thee; Pluto will call thee into his council, and will not gain much by so doing. But this is some comfort for my father Jupiter, whom thou wouldst have dethroned.

ALCIBIADES.

Pluto will gain a great deal by it, and that you shall see.

MERCURY.

Thou gavest wicked counsels in thy life-time.

ALCIBIADES.

I gave good ones too.

MERCURY.

Was that of the Sicilian enterprize a very wise one? Were the Athenians great gainers by it?

ALCIBIADES.

It is true, I gave the Athenians my advice to attack the Syracusans, not only with a view of subduing all Sicily and then Afric, but also of keeping Athens in a state of dependence upon me. When you have to do with a fickle, unequal, unreasonable people, you must not let them lie idle; you must always keep them involved in some great perplexity, that they may continually stand in need of you, and never have time to think of censuring your con-

duct. But that affair, tho' somewhat hazardous, would nevertheless have succeeded, had I had the management of it. I was recalled to Athens upon a foolish business, about those mutilated statues forsooth; after my departure Lamachus perished like a hot-headed fool. Nicias was a great indolent fellow, always fearful and irresolute. They that are so much afraid have more to fear than others; for they lose the advantages that fortune presents to them, and prevent none of the inconveniences which they have foreseen. I was accused also of having, in a debauch with some libertines, made a ludicrous celebration of the mysterious rites of Ceres. It was imagined too, that I performed the principal part there, namely that of priest. But it was all nonsense, they could never convict me of it.

MERCURY.

Nonsense! What was the reason then thou never daredst to present thyself, and answer the accusations.

ALCIBIADES.

I would have delivered myself up to them had any thing else been in question; but as my life was concerned, I would not have trusted it even to my own mother.

MERCURY.

What a cowardly answer! Art thou not ashamed to make it me? Thou who in thy most tender infancy could venture thy life to the mercy of a brutal car-man, didst not dare to put thy life into the hands of the judges, to save thy honour in thy riper years. Ah! my friend, thou must have been conscious of guilt.

ALCIBIADES.

You do not consider, that a child who is at play upon a road, and unwilling to break off his sport to

let a cart go past, will do a thing out of spite and stubbornness that a man would never do from the dictates of reason. But in short, you may say what you please, I feared my envyers, and the folly of the people, who run into a holy madness, whenever any of your deities come in question.

MERCURY.

Quite the language of a libertine! I could lay a wager that thou hadst ridiculed the mysteries of Eleusinian Ceres. As for my figures, I do not in the least doubt but thou wert the breaker of them.

CHARON.

I will by no means receive into my boat this enemy of the gods, this plague of man.

ALCIBIADES.

Thou must receive me: whither wouldst thou have me go then?

CHARON.

Back to the earth, to torment all the living, and to make some more noise there. This here is the mansion of silence and rest.

ALCIBIADES.

Ah! pray let me not wander on the Stygian banks, like the dead deprived of burial. My soul was too great amongst men to receive such an indignity. But after all, since I have had funeral honours, I can compel Charon to ferry me over. If I have lived a wicked life, the infernal judges will punish me for it; but as for this testy old fellow, I shall oblige him——

CHARON.

Since thou talkest in so high a strain, I would know how thou wert buried; for they talk very confusedly about thy death. Some say thou wert assassinated in a courtesan's arms; a glorious death.

for one who affects the great personage: others say thou wert burned. Now till such time as the fact be cleared up, I laugh at thy haughtiness, and do assure thee, that thou shalt not come into my boat.

ALCIBIADES.

It will not be difficult to relate my last adventure; it is not a little to my honour, and crowns a glorious life. Lyfander knowing what mischief I had done the Lacedemonians by serving my country in the field, and by negotiating for it with the Persians, resolved to require Pharnabazus to put me to death. This Pharnabazus commanded upon the coasts of Asia in name of the great king. As for me, upon seeing with what rashness the Athenian chiefs behaved, and that they would not so much as hear my advice; while their fleet lay in the river Egos near the Hellespont, I foretold them their destruction, which soon after came to pass; and I retired to a place in Phrygia, which the Persians had given me to subsist on; there I lived content, out of conceit with fortune, by which I had been so oft beguiled; and now thought of nothing but enjoying myself. The courtesan Timandra was with me. Pharnabazus, not daring to refuse my death to the Lacedemonians, sent his brother Magnaeus to cut off my head, and burn my body: but he and all his Persians together durst not come into the house where I was; they set fire to it on all sides, not one of them having the courage to come in and attack me. As soon as I perceived their design, I threw upon the flames all my cloaths, and all the household-furniture, even the very carpets, that came next to hand; then I wrapped my left hand in my cloak, and with my right grasping my naked sword, I rushed out of the house through the midst of my

enemies, without receiving the least hurt from the flames; nay scarce did they finge my cloaths. All the barbarians took to their heels the moment they saw me; but as they fled they poured back such a shower of darts and arrows upon me, that I fell transfix'd. Whenever they were gone off, Timandra came and took my body, wrapt it up, and gave it burial in the most honourable manner she was able.

MERCURY.

Was not this Timandra mother to the celebrated courtezan of Corinth, called Lais?

ALCIBIADES.

The same. Now this is the history of my death and burial, have you any difficulty yet remaining?

CHARON.

Yes; a great one doubtless, which I defy thee to remove.

ALCIBIADES.

Name it: we shall see.

CHARON.

Thou hadst no way to save thyself from the burning but by rushing, like a desperado, through the midst of thine enemies; and thou pretendest that Timandra, who lay buried in the ruins of that house, suffered not any harm. Besides, I hear several ghosts say, that neither the Lacedemonians nor the Persians were the occasion of thy death; but assure, that thou hadst seduced a virgin of a very noble family, according to thy laudable custom; and that her brothers resolving to revenge the dishonour, caused thee to be buried alive.

ALCIBIADES.

Be it as it will; thou canst not doubt, even ac-

according to this account, but I have been buried like other dead persons.

CHARON.

But thou hast not received the honours of burial. Thou seekest for subtilties. I see plainly thou hast been a dangerous, shuffling fellow.

ALCIBIADES.

I was buried like other dead persons, and that is sufficient. Wouldst thou have Timandra come and bring thee my ashes, or send thee a certificate? But if thou wilt still dispute the matter, I appeal to the three Judges here below; let me go over to plead my cause before them.

CHARON.

Right! thou wouldst have gained it, didst thou but get over. What a cunning fellow here is!

MERCURY.

The truth must be owned. As I came along, I saw the urn wherein the courtezan was said to have put her gallant's ashes. A man who had so much the knack of enchanting the women could never want burial: he has had honours, lamentations, tears, many more than he deserved.

ALCIBIADES.

I take instruments that Mercury saw my ashes in an urn: so now I command Charon, at his peril, to receive me into his bark; he has no longer any right to refuse me.

MERCURY.

I pity him for having any thing to do with thee: wicked wretch, thou hast been a general incendiary; it was thou who didst kindle that frightful war in all Greece; thou art the cause that the Athenians and Lacedemonians have been eight and twenty years in arms against each other, both by sea and land.

ALCIBIADES.

I was not the reason of it; you should blame my uncle Pericles for it.

MERCURY.

Pericles, it is true, began that dreadful war, but it was by thy advice. Dost thou not remember one day, that thou didst go and knock at his door? His servants told thee he had not time to see thee, because he was engaged in the accounts he was to give in to the Athenians, of the administration of the republic's revenues. To which thou madest answer: Instead of thinking to give an account, he would do much better to think of some expedient of never giving any. The expedient with which thou didst furnish him, was, to embroil affairs, to begin a war, and to keep the people in confusion. Pericles was corrupt enough to be counselled by thee: he began a war, and was killed in it: thy country has almost perished likewise, having therein lost its liberty. After this need we wonder if Arcestratus said, that all Greece was not able to support two Alcibiades? Timon, the misanthrope, was no less pleasant in his melancholy, when full of indignation against the Athenians, in whom he could perceive no remains of virtue, and meeting thee one day in the street, he saluted thee, and grasped thy hand, saying, Courage, my boy, provided thou continue to increase in authority, thou wilt soon bring upon these people all the miseries they deserve.

ALCIBIADES.

Must we be kept up with the sayings of a melancholy mad-man, who despised every body?

MERCURY.

We shall leave the melancholy madman. But

the advice thou gavest to Pericles, was it not a thief's advice?

ALCIBIADES.

Friend Mercury, it does not belong to thee to talk of thief; 'tis well known that thou hast long practised that trade: a sharper-god is not a very fit person to reprove men of dishonesty in money-affairs.

MERCURY.

Charon, I intreat thee to ferry him over as fast as possible; for we shall gain nothing at his hand. Take care only that he do not outwit the three Judges, and Pluto himself: warn them from me that he is a villain capable of raising a general revolt among the dead, and of destroying the most peaceful of kingdoms. The punishment he deserves, is to be debarred the sight of women, and be doomed to eternal silence. He hath too much abused his beauty and eloquence; he hath perverted those great gifts to the most mischievous purposes.

CHARON.

I shall give sufficient intimations against him, and I fancy he'll spend his time but badly amongst the ghosts, if he can carry on no roguish intrigues with them.



DIALOGUE XX.

DIONYSIUS, PYTHIAS, AND
DAMON.

Real virtue can love nothing but virtue.

DIONYSIUS.

GOOD God! what do I see? 'Tis Pythias arriving here.— 'Tis Pythias himself.— I could never have thought it. Hah! it is he: he is come to die, and to redeem his friend..

P Y T H I A S.

Yes; it is I. I went away for no other end but to pay to the gods what I had vowed them; to settle my family-affairs according to the rules of justice; and to bid adieu to my children, in order to die the more peaceably.

DIONYSIUS.

But what makes you come back? How now! hast thou no fear of death? Comest thou to seek it like a desperado, a mad-man?

P Y T H I A S.

I come to suffer it, though I have not deserved it; I cannot find in my heart to let my friend die in my stead.

DIONYSIUS.

Thou lovest him better than thyself then?

P Y T H I A S.

No: I love him as myself; but I think I ought to die rather than he, since it was me thou didst intend to put to death: it were not just that he should

suffer, to deliver me from death, the punishment thou preparedst for me.

DIONYSIUS.

But thou pretendest to deserve death no more than he.

P Y T H I A S.

It is true, we are both equally innocent; and 'tis no juster to put me to death than him.

DIONYSIUS.

Why sayst thou then that it were not just he should die instead of thee?

P Y T H I A S.

It is equally unjust in thee to put Damon or me to death: but Pythias were unjust did he let Damon suffer a death that the tyrant prepared only for Pythias.

DIONYSIUS.

Thou comest then on the day appointed, with no other view than to save the life of a friend by losing thy own?

P Y T H I A S.

I come, with regard to thee, to suffer an act of injustice, which is common with tyrants: and, with respect to Damon, to do a piece of justice, by rescuing him from a danger which he incurred out of generosity to me.

DIONYSIUS.

And thou, Damon, wert thou not really afraid that Pythias would never come back, and that thou shouldst have to pay for him.

D A M O N.

I knew but too well that Pythias would return punctually, and that he would be much more afraid to break his word, than to lose his life: would to the gods that his relations and friends had forcibly de-

tained him; so he would now be the comfort of good men, and I should have that of dying for him.

DIONYSIUS.

What! does life displease thee?

D A M O N.

Yes; it displeases me when I see a tyrant.

DIONYSIUS.

Well, thou shalt see him no more: I'll have thee put to death immediately.

P Y T H I A S.

Pardon the transports of a man who regrets his dying friend. But remember, that it was me only thou devotedst to death: I come to suffer it in order to redeem my friend: refuse me not this consolation in my last hour.

DIONYSIUS.

I cannot bear two men, who despise their lives, and my power.

D A M O N.

Then thou canst not bear virtue.

DIONYSIUS.

No: I cannot bear that proud, disdainful, virtue which contemns life, which dreads no punishment, which is not sensible to riches and pleasures.

D A M O N.

However, thou seest that it is not insensible to honour, justice and friendship.

DIONYSIUS.

Guards, take Pythias away to execution: we shall see whether Damon will continue to despise my power.

D A M O N.

Pythias, by returning to submit himself to thy pleasure, has merited his life at thy hand; and I, by

92 DIONYSIUS, PYTHIAS, AND DAMON.

giving myself up to thy indignation for him, have enraged thee; be content, and put me to death.

P Y T H I A S.

No, no, Dionysius; remember that it was I alone who displeased thee: Damon could not——

DIONYSIUS.

Alas! what do I see? Where am I? How unhappy am I, and how worthy to be so! No, I have hitherto known nothing; I have spent my days in darkness and error: all my power avails me nothing towards making myself beloved: I cannot boast of having acquired, in above thirty years tyranny, one single friend upon earth: these two men, in a private condition, love each other tenderly, unreservedly confide in each other, are happy in a mutual love, and content to die for each other.

P Y T H I A S.

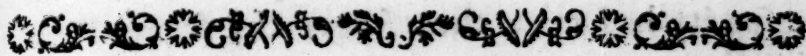
How should you have friends, you who never loved any body? Had you loved men, they would love you: you have feared them, they fear you, they detest you.

DIONYSIUS.

Damon, Pythias, vouchsafe to admit me between you, to be the third friend of so perfect a society: I give you your lives, and will load you with riches.

D A M O N.

We have no occasion for thy riches; and as for thy friendship, we cannot accept of it, until thou be good and just; till that time thou canst have only trembling slaves, and base flatterers. Thou must be virtuous, beneficent, sociable, susceptible of friendship, ready to hear the truth, and must know how to live in a sort of equality with real friends, in order to be beloved by free men.



DIALOGUE XXI.

DION AND GELO.

It is not the man ought to reign in a king, but the laws.

DION.

I Have long wished to see thee, O surprising man! I know that Syracuse once owed to thee her liberty.

GELO.

And I know that thou hadst not the sense to restore it her. Thou didst set out pretty well against the tyrant, though he was thy brother-in-law; but afterwards, pride, softnest, and suspicion, the vices of a tyrant, corrupted thy manners by degrees; and so thy own very people cut thee off.

DION.

Can any man govern a republic, without being exposed to treachery and envy?

GELO.

Yes, doubtless, and I am a noble proof of it. I was no Syracusan: though a stranger, they sought me to be king; they made me accept the crown; I wore it with mildness and moderation, so much for the happiness of the people, that my name is still dear to the citizens. Although my family, who reigned after me, dishonoured me by their vices, yet were they born with for my sake. After this instance it must be owned, that a man may command, without getting himself hated. But thou

needst not pretend to conceal thy faults from me; prosperity had made thee forget thy friend Plato's philosophy.

DION.

Ah! how is it possible to be a philosopher, when one is sovereign lord and master, and has passions unrestrained by any fear?

GELO.

I own I pity men who govern others; that great power of doing evil is a dreadful poison. But after all, I was a man like thyself, and yet lived in the royal authority to a great age, without abusing my power.

DION.

I still insist, that 'tis easy to be a philosopher in a private station; but when one is above every thing—

GELO.

'Tis when a man finds himself above every thing that he stands most in need of philosophy both for his own sake, and that of others whom he is to govern. Then he should be doubly wise, and inwardly, by his reason, limit a power which knows no controul from without.

DION.

But I had seen Dionysius the elder, my father-in-law, end his days quietly in the tyranny; and I imagined I had just to do the same.

GELO.

Art thou not sensible that thou hadst set out like an honest man, who desires to restore liberty to his country? But didst thou expect people would suffer thee in the tyranny, when they confided in thee for no other end but in order to pull down the tyrant. 'Tis a chance if wicked men escape the dangers that environ them; though indeed they are sufficiently

punished by the necessity under which they find themselves of guarding against those hazards, by shedding human blood, by desolating republics. They have not a moment's rest or security; they can never taste either the pleasure of virtue, or the sweets of friendship, confidence, or a good reputation. But thou who wast the hope of good men, who promisedst virtues without allay, who hadst proposed to introduce the republic of Plato, didst begin to live like a tyrant, and then think to be suffered to live!

D I O N.

Well, was I to return to the world, men should govern themselves for me; I would rather go and hide myself in some solitary isle, than take the charge of governing a republic. If a man is wicked, he has every thing to fear; if he is good, he has too much to suffer.

G E L O.

Good kings, 'tis true, have abundance of things to suffer; but they enjoy an inward tranquillity and a pure pleasure which tyrants are all their lives strangers to. Dost thou know the secret of reigning thus? Thou shouldst know it, for thou has oft heard Plato tell it.

D I O N.

Tell it me again, pray, for good fortune has made me forget it.

G E L O.

The man must not reign, he must be satisfied with making the laws reign. If he takes the royalty to himself, he spoils it, and proves his own destruction. He ought to exercise it only for the support of the laws, and the good of the people.

D I O N.

That is easier said than done.

G E L O.

Doubtless it is not easy to do, but not impossible. He who speaks to thee, did as he tells thee. I never sought authority, it came and sought me. I dreaded it, I knew all its troubles; I accepted it solely for the public good: I never made them feel I was master; I only made them sensible that both they and I ought to yield to reason and justice. An honoured old age, a death which put all Sicily in mourning, a spotless and immortal reputation, a virtue rewarded here below with the bliss of the Elysian fields; these are the fruits of that philosophy so long preserved on the throne.

D I O N.

Alas! I knew all thou tellest me, and I intended to do as much: but I did not distrust my passions, and they have undone me. May I beg thy permission never to leave thee more.

G E L O.

No; thou canst not be admitted amongst those blessed souls who have governed well. Farewell.



DIALOGUE XXII.

PLATO AND DIONYSIUS
THE TYRANT.

*A prince can find real happiness and security no
where but in the love of his subjects.*

DIONYSIUS.

HAH! Plato, good-morrow; thou art the very
fame I saw thee in Sicily.

PLATO.

As for thee, thou art far from being so brilliant
here as upon thy throne.

DIONYSIUS.

Thou wast but a chimerical philosopher; thy
commonwealth was only a delightful dream.

PLATO.

Thy tyranny hath proved no more solid than my
commonwealth; it is fallen to the ground.

DIONYSIUS.

It was thy friend Dion that betrayed me.

PLATO.

It was thou that betrayedst thyself: when a man
makes himself hated, he hath every thing to dread.

DIONYSIUS.

But then what trouble does it cost to make one's
self beloved? One must please others. Is it not
better to please one's self, at the risk of being
hated?

PLATO.

When a man makes himself detested, to gratify

his passions, he hath as many enemies as subjects, he is never a moment in safety. Tell me now the truth, didst thou sleep in peace?

DIONYSIUS.

No; I confess I did not: but that was because I had not put people enough to death.

PLATO.

Ah! dost thou not see that the death of some drew upon thee the hatred of others? That those who beheld their neighbours murdered, expected to perish in their turn, and had no way to save themselves but by getting beforehand with thee? You must either kill on till there is not a citizen left, or abate the rigour of punishments, before you can be beloved. When the people love you, guards are of no more use to you; you are in the midst of your people, as a father, who dreads nothing, in the midst of his own children.

DIONYSIUS.

I remember thou didst urge all these arguments with me, when I was upon the point of quitting the tyranny, in order to commence thy disciple; but a flatterer came in the way and prevented me. Thou must allow, that it is very hard to renounce sovereign power.

PLATO.

Had it not been better willingly to have quitted it in order to become a philosopher, than to have been shamefully dispossessed of it, in order to go and earn a livelihood at Corinth by the trade of school-master?

DIONYSIUS.

But I did not foresee that I should be expelled.

PLATO.

Ah! how couldst thou hope to continue master

in a place where thou hadst laid every body under a necessity of ruining thee, in order to avoid thy barbarity?

DIONYSIUS.

I was in hopes they would never presume to attack me.

PLATO.

When men risk more by letting you live than by attacking you, there will be always found some to dare it. Your own guards have no way of securing their lives, but by robbing you of yours. But speak honestly, didst thou not live with greater comfort in poverty at Corinth, than in all thy splendor at Syracuse?

DIONYSIUS.

Indeed I did. At Corinth the schoolmaster eat and slept well enough; the tyrant at Syracuse had continual fears: he must always be murdering of somebody, plundering the treasures, making of conquests: pleasures were no longer pleasures, they were grown quite insipid to me, and yet hurried me on too violently. But tell me, philosopher, in thy turn, didst not thou think thyself very unhappy, when I made thee be sold?

PLATO.

I enjoyed in slavery the same peace that thou didst at Corinth; with this difference, that I had the happiness of suffering for virtue through the injustice of the tyrant; and thou wert the tyrant, shamefully dispossessed of his tyranny.

DIONYSIUS.

Begone; I gain nothing by disputing with thee: if ever I return to the world, I shall make choice of a private station, or else I shall make myself beloved by the people who are governed by me.



DIALOGUE XXIII.

PLATO AND ARISTOTLE.

A criticism upon Aristotle's philosophy: the solidity of the eternal ideas of Plato.

ARISTOTLE.

DO you not know your old disciple? Have you forgot me?

PLATO.

How can I know you for my disciple? You never meant but to appear master of all the philosophers, and to make all that went before you be eternally forgotten.

ARISTOTLE.

That was because I said original things, and explained them in the clearest manner. I did not assume the poetical stile, in quest of the sublime; I did not fall into unintelligible fustian; I did not give into eternal ideas.

PLATO.

Every thing you said was borrowed from the books you endeavoured to suppress. You spoke, 'tis true, in a clear, precise, pure manner, but dry, and incapable of conveying the sublimity of divine truths. As for eternal ideas, you may laugh at them as much as you please; but without them you can establish no certain truths. How is it possible to affirm or deny one thing of another, unless there be unchangeable ideas of those two things? What is reason but our ideas? Did our ideas change,

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reason would be also changing. To-day the whole would be greater than the part; to-morrow the fashion would be gone, and the part would be greater than the whole. Those eternal ideas, which you would turn into ridicule, are therefore nothing but the first principles of reason which continually remain the same. So far are we from being able to judge of those first truths, that it is they that judge us, and correct us when we mistake. If I say an extravagant thing, other men immediately laugh at it, and I am ashamed of it. The case is, my reason, and that of my neighbours, is a rule above me, which comes and sets me right whether I will or no; as a just rule would correct a line I had drawn crooked, for want of tracing it up to the ideas which are the first and simple notions of every thing. You had not strong enough principles, and so did but grope in the dark.

ARISTOTLE.

Is there any thing clearer than my moral system?

PLATO.

It is clear, it is excellent, I confess. Your logic is subtle, methodical, exact, ingenuous. But your physics are nothing but an heap of abstracted terms and vague names, calculated to accustom men's minds to rest satisfied with words, and to think they understand what they do not understand. On this occasion you would have greatly needed clear ideas, in order to have avoided that unintelligible sustenance with which you reproach others. An ignorant man of sense owns honestly that he does not know what is first matter. One of your disciples thinks he tells wonders, when he says, that it is neither what, nor which, nor how much, nor any of the properties, whereby being is determined.

With this jargon a man fancies himself a great philosopher, and hates the vulgar and ignorant. The Epicureans that came after you reasoned more sensibly than you upon motion, and the figures of the corpuscles, which form by their assemblages all the compounds we see; at least, their system of physics explains many things with a sort of probability. It is true they never traced back the idea and nature of those corpuscles. They suppose always, without proof, rules ready made, and without knowing by whom; then they draw from them, as well as they can, the composition of all sensible nature. This philosophy in its principle is a mere fiction, 'tis true; but after all, it is of use to the understanding of a great many things in nature. Your physics teach nothing but words; they are not a system of philosophy, they are only an odd, out of the way language. Tiresias threatens you, that one day there shall come other philosophers who shall dispossess you of the schools, where you shall long have reigned, and who shall pull down your reputation from its towering height.

ARISTOTLE.

I was willing to conceal my principles, and this made me wrap up my physics so mysteriously.

PLATO.

And so well have you succeeded that no-body understands you, or at least if you are understood, you are found to say nothing.

ARISTOTLE.

I could not investigate all truths, nor make all experiments.

PLATO.

No man could have done it so conveniently: you had at your command the authority and mo-

ney of Alexander : had I enjoyed the same advantages, I would have made excellent discoveries.

ARISTOTLE.

Why did you not indulge Dionysius the tyrant in order to procure the same benefit ?

PLATO.

Because I was neither a courtier nor a flatterer : but did not you, who thought that princes should be indulged, lose the good graces of your disciple by your too ambitious enterprises ?

ARISTOTLE.

Alas ! 'tis but too true ! Even here below, if he sometimes calls to mind the days of his confidence in me, he at other times scorns to know me, and looks askew upon me.

PLATO.

That is, because he hath not found in your conduct the pure morality of your writings. Say the truth now, you did not in the least resemble your hero.

ARISTOTLE.

And did not you preach up the contempt of all earthly and transitory things, when at the same time you lived in a magnificent manner ?

PLATO.

I confess it ; but I was a considerable man in my country ; I lived in it with moderation and honour. Without authority or ambition, I made myself revered by the Greeks. The Stagyrte that would embroil every thing in the kingdom of his disciple, is a character which must be very despicable in sound philosophy.



DIALOGUE XXIV.

ALEXANDER AND ARISTOTLE.

How great soever be the natural qualities of a young prince, he hath every thing to fear if he do not keep flatterers at a distance from him, and accustom himself betimes to resist his passions, and to love those who have the courage to tell him the truth.

ARISTOTLE.

THE fight of my old scholar delights me. What glory is it for me to have educated the conqueror of Asia!

ALEXANDER.

My dear Aristotle, I behold thee again with pleasure: I had not seen thee from the time I left Macedon; but I never forgot thee during my conquests, thou well knowest.

ARISTOTLE.

Dost thou remember thy youth which was so amiable?

ALEXANDER.

Yes; methinks I am still at Pella, or at Pydna; and that thou comest from Stagira to teach me philosophy.

ARISTOTLE.

But thou hadst somewhat neglected my precepts, when too great prosperity intoxicated thy mind.

ALEXANDER.

I confess it. Thou well knowest me to be sin-

cere: now that I am no more than the shade of Alexander, I acknowledge that Alexander was too proud and haughty for a mortal.

ARISTOTLE.

Thou didst not take my hero for thy model.

ALEXANDER.

I was not fool enough. Thy hero is a mere pedant; he has nothing either true or natural in him: he is affected, and overstrained in every thing.

ARISTOTLE.

But wast not thou extravagant in thy heroism? to weep, on being told there were several worlds, that thou hadst not yet subdued; to over-run vast empires in order to restore them to their kings, when thou hadst vanquished them; to ravage the universe in order to be talked of; to rush single upon the ramparts of an enemy's city; to desire to pass for a God? Thou art more extravagant than my hero.

ALEXANDER.

So it seems I am come to thy school again! Thou tellest me my odious truths, as if we were still at Pella. It would not have been over-safe to have talked so freely to me on the banks of the Euphrates: but on the banks of the Styx, one hears a censor more patiently. Tell me then, good Aristotle, thou who knowest every thing, how comes it to pass that certain princes are so promising when young, and that they afterwards forget all the good maxims they have been taught, when it should be their business to put them in practice? To what purpose is it, that in their youth they chatter like parrots, to approve every thing that is good, since reason, which should grow in them with age, seems to fly away as soon as they enter upon affairs?

ARISTOTLE.

Indeed, thou wast a miracle in thy youth: thou didst politely entertain the ambassadors that came to Philip's court, thou didst love learning, thou didst read the poets, thou wast delighted with Homer, thy heart fired at the relation of the virtues and great actions of the heroes; when thou took'st Thebes, thou hadst regard to the house of Pindar; afterwards upon entering Asia, thou didst visit the tomb of Achilles, as also the ruins of Troy. All this speaks a disposition humane, and capable of noble sentiments. That fine disposition was also visible, when thou trusted thy life to Philip's physician; but above all, in thy so nobly treating the family of Darius, that that king on his death-bed consoled himself under his misfortune with the thoughts that thou wouldst be a father to his family. Such were the effects of philosophy, and of thy fine disposition. But the rest I dare not speak.

ALEXANDER.

Say on, say on, dear Aristotle, thou now hast no measures to keep.

ARISTOTLE.

That vain-glory, that effeminacy, those suspicions, those cruelties, those fits of passion, those mad sallies upon thy friends, that credulity to servile flatterers who impudently called thee a deity.

ALEXANDER.

Ah! thou sayst true. I wish I had died after conquering Darius!

ARISTOTLE.

What! thou wishest thou hadst not overcome the rest of the East?

ALEXANDER.

I es glory accrues to me from that conquest than

shame from having yielded to my prosperity, and forgot the human condition. But tell me, pray, how it comes to pass, that we are so wise in the infant-state, and so little reasonable when it were time to be most so?

ARISTOTLE.

The matter is, in our younger years we are instructed, excited, corrected by good men: afterwards we abandon ourselves to three kinds of enemies, presumption, our passions, and flatterers.



DIALOGUE XXV.

ALEXANDER AND CLITUS.

The fatal delicacy of the great, who cannot suffer their true servants, when they would make them acquainted with the faults they have committed.

CLITUS.

SAVE thee, mighty king! How long is it since thou camest down to this infernal kingdom?

ALEXANDER.

Ah! Clitus, retire; I cannot bear the sight of thee, for it reproaches me with my fault.

CLITUS.

'Tis Pluto's will that I continually abide before thine eyes, to punish thy having unjustly killed me. I am sorry for it, for I still love thee, notwithstanding what thou hast done to me; but I never can leave thee more.

ALEXANDER.

O cruel company! For ever to look upon a per-

son who revives the memory of what one was so much ashamed of committing.

CLITUS.

I do easily look upon my murderer: why canst not thou look upon a person whom thou hast put to death? I perceive the great are more delicate than other people; they chuse to see none but such as are pleased with them, flatter them, and pretend to admire them. It is no longer time to be delicate when upon the banks of the Styx: thou shouldst have laid aside that delicacy, when thou laidst aside the kingly greatness. Thou hast nothing to give away here, so thou wilt find no flatterers.

ALEXANDER.

Ah! what misery! upon earth I was a god; here I am but a shade, and unmercifully upbraided with my faults.

CLITUS.

Why didst thou then commit them?

ALEXANDER.

I was intoxicated with liquor when I killed thee.

CLITUS.

A fine excuse truly for a hero, nay, a god! He who ought to have been reasonable enough to govern the whole universe, lost all his reason through drunkenness, and made himself like a wild beast. But be ingenuous and confess the truth; thou wert yet more intoxicated with pride and passion than with wine: thou couldst not brook my condemning thy vanity, which prompted thee to receive divine honours, and to forget the services that had been done thee. Answer me, I am now not afraid of thy killing me.

ALEXANDER.

O cruel gods! why cannot I be revenged of you!

But alas! I cannot even take vengeance on this ghost of Clitus, which comes thus insolently to insult me.

CLITUS.

Thou art as passionate and fiery as thou wert amongst the living. But no one dreads thee here; for my part, thou movest my compassion.

ALEXANDER.

What! the great Alexander move the compassion of a vile slave like Clitus! Ah! why cannot I kill him or myself.

CLITUS.

It is not in thy power now to do either; shades do not die. Behold thou art now immortal, but in another manner than thou pretendedst. Thou must even resolve to be but a ghost like myself, and like the meanest of men. Thou wilt here find no more provinces to plunder, nor monarchs to trample under thy feet; no more palaces to burn in thy drunkenness, no more foolish stories to boast thee the son of Jupiter.

ALEXANDER.

Thou treat'st me as a mean wretch.

CLITUS.

No; I acknowledge thee a great conqueror, of a sublime genius; but spoiled by too great successes. Does telling truth with affection offend thee? If it does, return to the earth, and seek thy flatterers.

ALEXANDER.

What then shall all my glory avail me, if Clitus himself do not spare me?

CLITUS.

It was thy passion that sullied thy glory upon earth. Would'st thou preserve it pure in these low-

er regions, thou must be modest with ghosts that have nothing to lose or to gain with thee.

ALEXANDER.

But thou saidst that thou didst love me.

CLITUS.

Yes, I love thy person, but not thy failings.

ALEXANDER.

If thou lovest me, spare me.

CLITUS.

Because I love thee, I will not spare thee. When thou appearedst so chaste before the wife and daughter of Darius, when thou shewedst so much generosity to that conquered prince, thou didst deserve great praises, and I bestowed them on thee. But afterwards prosperity made thee grow careless even of thy own glory.



DIALOGUE XXVI.

ALEXANDER AND DIOGENES.

Flattery is pernicious to princes.

DIOGENES.

IS not that Alexander I behold amongst the dead?

ALEXANDER.

Thou art not mistaken, Diogenes.

DIOGENES.

How! do gods die?

ALEXANDER.

No; but men do, who are by nature mortal.

DIOGENES.)

But dost thou think thyself a mere man?

ALEXANDER.

What other thought could I have of myself?

DIOGENES.

Thou art growing surprisingly modest since thy death. Nothing had been wanting to thy glory, Alexander, had thou been as much so in thy lifetime.

ALEXANDER.

Wherein, pray, did I so far forget myself?

DIOGENES.

Dost thou ask; thou who, not satisfied with being son to a great king that had made himself master of Greece, didst arrogate a descent from Jove? Thy slaves made their court to thee, by telling thee, that a serpent had infolded Olympias. Thou wouldst rather have that monster to thy father, because that tickled thy vanity more, than to be descended from a long race of Macedonian kings; because thou foundst nothing in such birth superior to humanity. Didst thou not suffer the scandalous and shameful flattery of the priests of Jupiter Ammon, when she answered, that thou didst blaspheme in supposing that thy father could have murderers? Thou wert wise enough to improve her salutary hint, and didst carefully avoid falling again into the like impiety. Too weak a man to support the talents heaven has bestowed upon thee!

ALEXANDER.

Dost thou imagine, Diogenes, that I was fool enough to believe all those fables?

DIOGENES.

Why then didst thou authorise them?

ALEXANDER.

Because they authorised me: I despised them, and yet made use of them, because they gave me an absolute power over men. Those who would

have but little regarded Philip's son, trembled before the son of Jupiter. There is a necessity of deceiving the people: truth hath no weight with them; falshood is almighty upon their minds. That single answer of the priestess which thou mention'st with derision, did more to promote my conquests than all my valour and contrivance. One must learn to know men, adapt one's self to them, and lead them in the paths in which they are capable of walking.

DIOGENES.

Men of the character thou describest deserve to be despised, as well as the error they are slaves to: in order to be esteemed by so despicable people, thou hadst recourse to falshood, which made thee more unworthy than any of them.



DIALOGUE XXVII.

DIOGENES AND DIONYSIUS
THE ELDER.

A prince who makes his happiness and glory to consist in gratifying his pleasures and passions, can be happy neither in this world, nor in the next.

DIONYSIUS.

I Am glad to see a man of thy reputation: Alexander has been telling me of thee since he came down to these regions.

DIOGENES.

For my part, I had heard but too much of thee upon earth; thou there madest as great a noise as

torrents do which carry universal devastation along with them.

DIONYSIUS.

Is it true that thou wert happy in thy tub?

DIOGENES.

One certain sign that I was happy in it is, that I never sought any thing further, and that I despised even the offers of the young Macedonian thou speakest of. But is it not true that thou wert not happy in possessing Syracuse and Sicily, since thou didst also want to enter by Rhegium into the midst of Italy?

DIONYSIUS.

Thy moderation was nothing but vanity and an affectation of virtue.

DIOGENES.

Thine ambition was nothing but folly, and a furious pride, that could do justice neither to others nor to thyself.

DIONYSIUS.

Thou talkest very boldly.

DIOGENES.

And dost thou still imagine thyself the tyrant?

DIONYSIUS.

Alas! I am but too sensible that I am no more so. I held the Syracusans, as I have often boasted, in adamantine chains: but the scissars of the fatal sisters cut those chains, together with the thread of my life.

DIOGENES.

I hear thee sigh, and am convinced thou didst also sigh in the midst of thy glory. For my part, I never sighed in my tub, and have no occasion to sigh here below; for when I died, I left no estate worth the regretting. Poortyrant! how much hast

thou lost by being so rich; and how much hath Diogenes gained by possessing nothing!

DIONYSIUS.

All the pleasures came in crowds to attend me: my music was delightful; I had an exquisite table, numberless slaves, the richest perfumes, furniture of gold and silver, pictures, statues, shews of all kinds, men of wit to entertain and praise me, and armies to overcome my enemies.

DIOGENES.

And over and above all that, suspicions, alarms, and mad fits, which prevented thy enjoying such great happiness.

DIONYSIUS.

I confess it; but how could one live in a tub?

DIOGENES.

Ah! who hindered thee to live peaceably like a good man, in thy own house, like other people, and to embrace a sweet philosophy? But is it true, that thou didst always imagine, in the midst of thy delights, that thou sawest a sword hanging over thy head?

DIONYSIUS.

Let us talk no more of it: thou meanest to insult me.

DIOGENES.

Wilt thou suffer one other question as home as the former?

DIONYSIUS.

I must needs suffer it; I have now no threats to hinder thee; I am here effectually disarmed.

DIOGENES.

Whether or no didst thou promise rewards to all who should invent new pleasures? 'Twas a strange rage of voluptuousness! O how greatly hadst thou

mis-reckoned! first to turn thy country upside down, in order to be happy, and then to be so wretched, and in such craving want of pleasures!

DIONYSIUS.

I was obliged to endeavour to get new ones invented, as all ordinary pleasures were grown old to me.

DIOGENES.

All nature then did not suffice thee! What was there that could quiet thy raging passions? Could new pleasures have cured thy misgivings, and stilled the remorse of thy crimes?

DIONYSIUS.

No: but the sick do what they can to find relief from their maladies. They try new methods of cure, and new meats to create an appetite.

DIOGENES.

So thine was at once cloyed and craving: cloyed of every thing thou hadst, and craving of every thing thou couldst not have. A fine situation truly! and this it was thou tookst so much trouble to acquire and preserve. An excellent receipt for making a man happy! It well becomes thee to make a jest of my tub, where a little water, a little bread, and a little fun rendered me content. When one knows how to relish those simple pleasures of pure nature, they never pall by the using, and one never wants them. But when a man despises them, he never so rich and powerful, he wants every thing; for he can enjoy nothing.

DIONYSIUS.

These truths thou tell'st afflict me; they make me think of my son, whom I left tyrant behind me: he were happier, had I left him a poor tradesman, inured to moderation, and bred in the school of ad-

verfity; at leaft he would have fome real pleasures, which nature does by no means deny to middle ftations.

DI O G E N E S.

To reftore his appetite, he fhould be made to faft, and to prevent his loathing his gilded palace, he fhould be fent to occupy my tub, which has ftood empty fince my death.

D I O N Y S I U S.

Nor will he even know how to maintain himfelf in that power, which I was at fuch pains to procure for him.

D I O G E N E S.

Oh! what wouldft thou have a man to know, who is born in too great profperity, and brought up in effeminacy? He hardly knows how to take pleafure when it comes to his hand. Every body muft be plagued to divert him.



D I A L O G U E XXVIII.

PYRRHO AND HIS NEIGHBOUR.

The falſeneſs and abſurdity of Pyrrhonism.

N E I G H B O U R.

Good-morrow, Pyrrho. I hear you have got a great number of ſcholars, and that your ſchool has gained a high reputation; will you be pleaſed to receive and inſtruct me?

P Y R R H O.

I will, methinks.

NEIGHBOUR.

Why do you add, methinks? Do you not know what you will? If you do not know, who should know it for you? And what do you know then, you who pass for so knowing a man?

PYRRHO.

I! I know nothing.

NEIGHBOUR.

What do people learn then by hearing you?

PYRRHO.

Nothing at all.

NEIGHBOUR.

Why then do they hear you?

PYRRHO.

To be convinced of their ignorance. Is it not knowing a great deal, to know that they know nothing?

NEIGHBOUR.

No indeed it is not. The most vulgar and ignorant clown is conscious of his ignorance, tho' he is neither a philosopher nor a learned man; yet is he more sensible of his ignorance than you are of yours: for you think yourself above all men by affecting to be ignorant of every thing. This affected ignorance does by no means take away your presumption; whereas the clown, who is conscious of his ignorance, is in all things diffident of himself, and that in great sincerity.

PYRRHO.

The clown believes himself ignorant only of certain things too high for him, and which require study; but he does not suppose himself ignorant that he walks, that he speaks, that he lives. For my part, I am ignorant of all that, and by principle too.

NEIGHBOUR.

What! are you ignorant of all that concerning yourself? Fine principles, truly; to admit no principles at all!

PYRRHO.

Yes; I am ignorant whether I live, whether I exist. In short, I am ignorant of all things without exception.

NEIGHBOUR.

But are you ignorant that you think?

PYRRHO.

Yes; I do not know that I do.

NEIGHBOUR.

To be ignorant of all things is to doubt of all things, and to find nothing certain: is it not true?

PYRRHO.

It is, if any thing can be so.

NEIGHBOUR.

To be ignorant and to doubt is the same thing. To doubt and to think is also the same thing: therefore you cannot doubt without thinking. Your doubt is then a certain proof that you think. Therefore there is something certain, since your very doubt proves the certainty of your thought.

PYRRHO.

I am ignorant even of my ignorance. I have you there.

NEIGHBOUR.

If you are ignorant of your ignorance, why do you speak of it? Why do you defend it? Why do you attempt to inculcate it into your scholars, and to persuade them out of all they have ever believed. If you are ignorant of your very ignorance, you should give no more lectures upon it, nor despise those who think they know the truth.

P Y R R H O.

Our whole life is perhaps but one continued dream. Perhaps the moment of death shall be but a sudden waking, when we shall discover the illusion of what we have believed most real; as a man awaking sees all the phantoms disappear, that he fancied he saw and touched in his dreams.

N E I G H B O U R.

You are afraid then you sleep and dream with your eyes open. You say PERHAPS of every thing; but that very PERHAPS speaks a thought. Your dream, false as it is, is still the dream of a man dreaming; at least it is sure that you dream; for there must needs be something, and something that thinks too, to have dreams. Nothing can neither sleep nor dream, nor be deceived, nor be ignorant, nor doubt, nor say PERHAPS. Behold you are condemned then, whether you will or not, to know something, which is your dreaming, and to be at least a dreaming and a thinking being.

P Y R R H O.

This subtlety is puzzling. I will have no such subtle and troublesome scholar in my school.

N E I G H B O U R.

You will then and you will not. In truth every thing you say and do belyes your affected doubting. If you will have none such as me for a scholar, I will far less have any such as you for a master.





DIALOGUE XXIX.

PYRRHUS AND DEMETRIUS
POLIORCETES.

*Temperance and virtue, not conquest and success, make
the hero.*

DEMETRIUS.

I Come to salute here the greatest hero, next to
Alexander, Greece hath ever produced.

PYRRHUS.

Is not that Demetrius I perceive? I know him
by the description I have had of him.

DEMETRIUS.

Have you heard of the great wars I had to carry
on?

PYRRHUS.

Yes; but I have also heard of your effeminacy
and remissness in time of peace.

DEMETRIUS.

If I had a little effeminacy, my great actions
made full amends for it.

PYRRHUS.

As for me, in all the wars I waged, I was ever
firm. I shewed the Romans that I knew how to
support my allies: for when they attacked the Ta-
rentines, I passed to their assistance with a formi-
dable army, and made the Romans feel the strength
of my arm.

DEMETRIUS.

But Fabricius had an easy purchase of you at last;

and it manifestly appeared that your troops were not comparable to the Roman forces. Your elephants were the cause of your victory, they confounded the Romans, who were not used to that kind of fighting. But in the second battle the advantage was equal on both sides; and, in the third, the Romans got a complete victory. You were forced to re-pass into Epirus, and died at last by a woman's hand.

PYRRHUS.

I died fighting; but as for you, I know what brought you to the grave; it was your debauchery and gluttony. You supported hot wars, I confess, and even had some advantage: but amidst those wars, you were environed with a flock of courtezans, who followed you always, as sheep do their shepherd. As for me, I shewed myself constant on all occasions, even under my misfortunes; nay, I believe, in that particular, I surpassed even Alexander himself.

DEMETRIUS.

Ay, but his actions surpassed yours: to pass the Danube upon goats' skins, to force the passage of the Granicus with an handful of troops in the face of an infinite army of enemies; always to beat the Persians in open field and in defile; to take their cities, to penetrate as far as India, and at length to conquer all Asia. All this was far greater than entering into Italy, and being forced to leave it shamefully.

PYRRHUS.

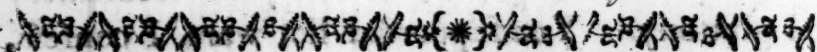
By those great conquests Alexander drew his death upon him: for 'tis alledged that Antipater, whom he had left in Macedonia, caused him to be poisoned at Babylon, in order to have all his dominions.

D E M E T R I U S.

His hope proved vain, and my father shewed him, that he meddled with one who was too strong for him.

P Y R R H U S.

I confess I set Alexander but a bad example; for I had a design to subdue Italy: but he would be nothing less than king of the universe; and had been much happier in remaining king of Macedon, than in roaming over Asia like a crazy person.



D I A L O G U E X X X.

DEMOSTHENES AND CICERO.

A parallel between these two orators, wherein is given the character of true eloquence.

C I C E R O.

WHAT dost thou pretend that I was but an ordinary orator?

D E M O S T H E N E S.

Not an ordinary one; for it is not over an ordinary person that I affect superiority. Thou wert undoubtedly a famous orator. Thou hadst great parts; but didst frequently deviate from the point in which perfection consists.

C I C E R O.

And pray hadst thou no faults at all?

D E M O S T H E N E S.

I believe none can be laid to my charge in point of eloquence.

CICERO.

Canst thou compare richness of genius with me? Thou who art dry, unadorned, who art ever confined within narrow and contracted limits; thou dost not amplify any subject; thou from whom nothing can be retrenched, so starved, if I may use the term, is the manner in which thou treat'st thy subjects: whereas I give mine a length, which displays a copiousness and fertility of genius, which gave men of judgment occasion to say, that nothing could be added to my works.

DEMOSTHENES.

He from whom nothing can be retrenched hath said nothing but what is perfect.

CICERO.

He to whom nothing can be added hath omitted nothing that could embellish his work.

DEMOSTHENES.

I suppose thou findest thy discourses more filled with flashes of wit than mine? Speak honestly, is not that the reason thou exaltest thyself above me?

CICERO.

I will even own it to thee then, since thou talkest so. My pieces are far more brilliant than thine. They speak far more wit, more ingenuity of turn, more art, more ease. I exhibit the same thing under twenty different shapes. When people heard my orations, they could not forbear admiring my parts, and being continually astonished at my art; they were ever shouting and interrupting me, in order to praise and extol me. Thou must have been heard very quietly, and thy audience, I suppose, gave thee no interruption.

DEMOSTHENES.

What thou sayest of us both is true. Thou mi-

stakest only in the conclusion thou drawest from it. Thou didst take up the assembly with thyself: I took it up only with the affairs I spoke upon. People admired thee; I was forgot by my audience, who saw nothing but the course I wanted them to take. Thou didst entertain with the fallies of thy wit. I struck down with bolts of thunder. Thou madest men say: How elegantly he speaks! I made them say: Come on, let us march against Philip. They extolled thee: they were too much carried out of themselves to extol me. When thou didst harangue, thou appearedst ornate; none discovered in me any ornament: there was nothing in my pieces but precise, strong, clear arguments; and then impulses like lightning which nothing could resist. Thou wert a perfect orator, when thou wert, like me, simple, grave, austere, without apparent art; in short, when thou wert Demosthenical: but when wit, turn, and art shone forth in thy discourses, then wert thou mere Cicero, departing so far from perfection, as thou departedst from my character.



D I A L O G U E XXXI.

DEMOSTHENES AND CICERO.

The difference between the Orator and the true Philosopher.

C I C E R O.

TO have lived in the time of Plato, and even to have been his scholar, methinks you profited very little by such an advantage.

DEMOSTHENES.

Have you then remarked nothing in my orations, you who read them to so good purpose, that favoured of Plato's maxims, and his manner of persuading?

CICERO.

That is not what I mean: you were the greatest orator of the Greeks; but then you were nothing but an orator. As for me, though I never knew Plato but in his writings, and lived about three hundred years after him, I strove to imitate him in philosophy; I made him known to the Romans, and was the first who introduced that kind of writing among them; insomuch that I united as far as I was capable, in one and the same person, eloquence and philosophy.

DEMOSTHENES.

And so you imagine you were a great philosopher?

CICERO.

To be so, it is sufficient to love wisdom, and to labour to acquire knowledge and virtue: I think I may give myself the title without excess of vanity.

DEMOSTHENES.

For an orator, I own, you were the first of your nation; and even the Greeks of your time admired you: but for a philosopher, I cannot own it. One is not that at so easy a rate.

CICERO.

You don't know what it cost me: my lucubrations, my labours, my meditations; the books I read, the masters I heard, the treatises I composed.

DEMOSTHENES.

All that is not philosophy.

CICERO.

What more, pray, is requisite?

DEMOSTHENES.

To do what you said of Cato by way of derision, to study philosophy, not in order to discover the truths it teaches, to argue about it as most men do; but in order to reduce it to practice.

CICERO.

And did not I do so? Did not I live up to the doctrine of Plato and Aristotle, which I had embraced?

DEMOSTHENES.

Let us drop Aristotle: I might perhaps dispute him the quality of a philosopher, nor can I have any great opinion of a Greek, who was attached to a monarch, and that to Philip: as for Plato, I maintain that you never followed his maxims.

CICERO.

'Tis true that in my youth, and during the most part of my life, I followed the active and laborious life of those whom Plato calls Politicians. But when I saw my country had changed its aspect, and that I could no longer be of use to her in high employments, I sought to serve her by the sciences, and retired to my country seats, in order to apply myself to contemplation, and the study of truth.

DEMOSTHENES.

That is to say, philosophy was your last resort, when you had no longer any share in the administration, and that then you had a mind to distinguish yourself by your studies: for it was glory more than virtue that you pursued in them.

CICERO.

It is in vain to lie, I always loved glory, as an attendant of virtue.

DEMOSTHENES.

Say rather, you loved glory much, and virtue little.

CICERO.

Upon what grounds do you judge so hardly of me?

DEMOSTHENES.

Upon your own discourses: at the very time you played the philosopher, did you not pronounce those fine orations, wherein you flattered Cæsar your tyrant, more servilely, than ever was Philip by his slaves? Yet we know how you loved him; it well appeared after his death, and in his life time you did not spare him in your letters to Atticus.

CICERO.

It was expedient to conform one's self to the times, and endeavour to sooth the tyrant, lest he should grow still worse.

DEMOSTHENES.

You talk like a good orator, though like a bad philosopher: but what became of your philosophy after his death? Who forced you to enter again into public affairs?

CICERO.

The Romans, who looked upon me as their sole support.

DEMOSTHENES.

Your vanity prompted you to think so, and delivered you up to a young man, who made a tool of you. But let us return to the point: you were always an orator, never a philosopher.

CICERO.

And were you ever any thing else?

DEMOSTHENES.

I own I was not; but then I never made any o-

ther profession, I deceived no-body : I came early to understand that I must choose between rhetoric and philosophy ; that each required a whole man. The desire of glory touched me : I thought it a noble thing for me who was but a private citizen, and a common tradesman's son, to govern the people by my eloquence, and make a stand against the power of Philip. I loved the public weal, and the liberty of Greece ; but I may now confess I loved myself still better, and was very sensible of the pleasure of receiving a crown in full theatre, and of leaving my statue in the public place, with a pompous inscription upon it. Now I see things in another light, and perceive that Socrates was in the right, when he assured Gorgias, ' That eloquence ' was no such fine thing as he thought ; were it even to attain its end, and render a man absolute ' master in his republic.' This both you and I attained : confess now, we were nothing the happier.

CICERO.

'Tis true our lives were two continued scenes of toils and dangers. I had no sooner defended Roscius, than I was fain to fly into Greece, to avoid the indignation of Sylla. The accusation of Verres drew a vast number of enemies upon me ; my consulship, the time of my greatest glory, was also the time of my greatest toils, and of my greatest dangers. I was frequently in hazard of my life, and the hatred I then incurred broke out afterwards by my banishment. In short, it was nothing but my eloquence that was the occasion of my death, and had I not pushed Antony so hard I had been still living. I say nothing of your misfortunes ; it were needless to recal them to your mind. But neither of us have any thing to blame but fate, or

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fortune, if you will, which made it our lot to be born in so corrupt times, that it was impossible to reform our republics, or even to prevent their ruin.

DEMOSTHENES.

It was therein we wanted judgment, undertaking impossibilities: for it was not our people that forced us to take care of the public affairs, and we were not at all engaged in them by our birth. I forgive a prince born in the purple for governing, as he can, a state, which the gods have committed to his charge, by causing him to be born of a certain race, seeing he is not at freedom to abandon that trust, how bad soever he find his situation: but a mere private person ought to think of nothing but regulating himself and governing his own family; he ought never to desire public offices, far less to court them: if they be forced upon him, he may accept them out of love to his country; but when once he has not the liberty of doing good, and his citizens grow regardless both of the laws and of reason, he ought to return into private life, and content himself with deploring the public calamities which he finds himself unable to prevent.

CICERO.

By your way of reckoning, my friend Pomponius Atticus was wiser than I, and even than Cato himself, whom we so highly praised.

DEMOSTHENES.

Undoubtedly, Atticus was a true philosopher: Cato was unseasonably obstinate in pretending to reform a people who would live no longer in liberty, and you yielded too easily to Cæsar's fortune; at least, you did not enough preserve your dignity.

CICERO.

But after all, is not eloquence a good thing, naya great gift of the gods?

DEMOSTHENES.

It is very good in itself: it is only the use of it that may be bad; as when it is employed towards tickling the passions of the people, or the gratifying of our own. And what else did we in our virulent declamations against our enemies? I against Midias or Æschines, you against Piso, Vatinius or Antony? How egregiously did our passions and interests make us offend against truth and justice! The real use of eloquence is to set truth in its proper light, and to persuade others to their true interest, that is, to justice, and the other virtues. It was the use that Plato made of it, which neither of us imitated.



DIALOGUE XXXII.

CORIOLANUS AND CAMILLUS.

Men are not born independent, but subject to the laws of the country where they have been born, and bred, and protected in their infancy.

CORIOLANUS.

WELL, you have experienced, as well as I, the ingratitude of a native country. 'Tis an odd thing to serve a foolish people. Come, own it honestly, and excuse a little those whose patience fails them.

CAMILLUS.

For my part, I find no excuse for such as rise up

against their country. We may retire, give place to injustice, wait less rigorous times; but it is an act of impiety to take up arms against the mother that bore us.

CORIOLANUS.

Those specious names of Mother and Country are nothing but names. Men are born free and independent: societies with all their subordinations and politics are mere human institutions, which can never destroy the liberty essential to man. If the society of men, in which we have been born, comes to be wanting in justice and honesty, we no longer owe it any thing, we regain the natural rights of our liberty, and may go in quest of some other more reasonable society, where to live in quiet, as a traveller passes from town to town, according to his taste and conveniency. All those fine notions of a native country have been instilled by crafty spirits, ambitious to lord it over us. Lawgivers have crammed many of them down our throats; but we must always return to the natural right, which renders every man free and independent: now every man born in this state of independency with regard to others, he pawns his liberty, by entering into the society of a people, only upon condition, that he shall be equitably dealt by. The moment society breaks this condition, the private person regains his rights, and the whole universe is as free to him as to others. He has but to secure himself from a superior force, and to enjoy his liberty.

CAMILLUS.

How subtle a philosopher you are become here below! They say you were less given to reasoning while alive. But do you not see your error? Such an agreement with society may have some shadow

of pretence, when a man makes choice of a country to live in; though still he is justly liable to be punished according to the laws of the respective nation, if he hath entered himself a member of it, and doth not live according to its manners. But children who are born in a country, have not their country to choose: the gods give it them, or rather give them to that society of men, which is their country, to the end that that country may possess, govern; reward or punish them as its children. It is by no means choice, policy, art, or arbitrary institution, that subjects children to a father; 'tis nature which hath decreed. Fathers collective form a native country, and have an ample authority over the children they have brought into the world. Would you dare to question it?

CORIOLANUS.

Yes, I dare. Though a man be my father, I am a man as well as he, and as free as he, by the essential rules of humanity. I owe him indeed gratitude and respect; but nature hath never made me dependent upon him.

CAMILLUS.

What excellent rules you lay down for virtue! At that rate every one will think he has a right to be as he chuses; and there will be no more, upon earth, either polity, security, subordination, regular society, or certain principles of good manners.

CORIOLANUS.

There will always be reason and virtue implanted by nature in the hearts of men; if they make a wrong use of their liberty, so much the worse for them; but though their liberty abused may turn to licentiousness, yet it is certain that by nature they are free.

CAMILLUS.

I grant it. But you must also own that all the wisest of men, having found the inconvenience of that liberty, which would make as many whimsical governments as there are whimsical heads, have concluded that nothing was so essential to the peace of men, as the subjecting the multitude to the laws established in every nation. Is it not true that this is the regulation the wisest men have made in all places, as the foundation of all society?

CORIOLANUS.

It is true..

CAMILLUS.

That regulation was necessary.

CORIOLANUS.

True again.

CAMILLUS.

It is not only wise, just, and necessary in itself; but also authorised by almost universal consent, or at least by that of the greater part of men. If it is necessary for human life, none but obstinate and unreasonable men will reject it.

CORIOLANUS.

I allow what you say; but such a regulation is merely arbitrary.

CAMILLUS.

What is so essential to society, to the peace, to the safety of mankind, what reason necessarily requires, must be founded in rational nature itself, and is by no means arbitrary: therefore that subordination is not at all an invention to govern weak minds; 'tis, on the contrary, a necessary bond, which reason furnishes to regulate, to pacify, to unite men amongst themselves. It therefore cannot be denied, that reason, which is the real nature of

reasonable creatures, requires that they subject themselves to laws, and to certain men, who stand in the place of the first legislators; that, in a word, they obey, that they all unanimously concur towards relieving the common wants, and promoting the common interests, that they use their liberty only according to reason, to strengthen and perfect society. This is what they call being a good citizen, loving one's country, and being attached to the republic.

CORIOLANUS.

You that accuse me of subtlety, are yourself more subtle than I.

CAMILLUS.

Not at all: let us recapitulate if you will: by what proposition have I out-witted you? Reason is the nature of man. That one is true; is it not?

CORIOLANUS.

Undoubtedly it is.

CAMILLUS.

Man is not at liberty to walk contrary to all reason: what say you to that?

CORIOLANUS.

I say it must also pass.

CAMILLUS.

Reason wills us to live in society, and consequently with subordination. Your answer?

CORIOLANUS.

I think as you do.

CAMILLUS.

There must therefore be inviolable rules of society, which man names laws, and men guardians of the laws, who are called magistrates, to punish such as transgress them; otherwise there would be as many arbitrary governments as heads, and the greatest

wrong-heads would be those who would most pervert the manners and laws, in order to govern, or at least to live according to their different whims.

CORIOLANUS.

All that is evident.

CAMILLUS.

Therefore it is the part of rational nature to subject its liberty to the laws and magistrates of the society in which we live.

CORIOLANUS.

That is certain; but we are at liberty to quit that society.

CAMILLUS.

If every one is at liberty to quit his own wherein he is born, there will presently be no more regular society upon earth.

CORIOLANUS.

Why so?

CAMILLUS.

For this reason: the wrong-heads being the majority, they will all think they may shake off the yoke of their country, and go elsewhere to live without rule or restraint; this majority will become independent; and will quickly destroy all authority every where; they will even go out of their country to seek arms against their country itself. From that moment there is no longer any settled or sure society of people. Thus would you overturn the laws and society, which, by your own confession, reason requires, in order to indulge an unbridled liberty, or rather the libertinism of foolish and wicked men, who never think themselves free but when they can, without fear of being punished, bid defiance to reason and the laws.

CORIOLANUS.

I now see plainly the whole scope of your reasoning, and I begin to relish it.

CAMILLUS.

Add to this, that the institution of a republic and laws, being afterwards ratified by the universal consent and practice of mankind, some brutal and barbarous nations only excepted, all human nature, so to speak, hath for numberless ages given itself up to the government of laws, through an absolute necessity: the foolish even and the wicked, provided they be not wholly so, feel and acknowledge this want of living in common, and of being subject to laws.

CORIOLANUS.

I understand you, and you will have it that our native country being vested with that right sacred and inviolable, we cannot take up arms against her.

CAMILLUS.

It is not only I who will have it so, 'tis nature itself that requires it. When Volumnia your mother, and Vetruria your wife, spoke to you in behalf of Rome, what did they say to you, what did you feel at the bottom of your heart?

CORIOLANUS.

'Tis true nature spoke to me in behalf of my mother; but it did not therefore speak to me in behalf of Rome.

CAMILLUS.

Very well, your mother spoke to you in behalf of Rome, and nature spoke to you by the mouth of your mother. These are the natural links that attach us to our country. Could you attack the city of your mother, of all your relations and friends, without violating the rights of nature? I do not ask

any reasoning upon the matter, 'tis your immediate sentiment without reflection that I consult.

CORIOLANUS.

'Tis true, we act contrary to nature as often as we fight against our country: but if it is not lawful to attack her, you must at least own, that it is lawful to forsake her when she proves unjust and ungrateful.

CAMILLUS.

No. I shall never confess any such thing: if she banish you, you may go and take refuge elsewhere: 'Tis obeying her to go out of her bosom when she expels us; but we should even at a distance respect her, wish her welfare, be ready to return to her, to defend her, and to die for her.

CORIOLANUS.

Where do you get all those fine notions of heroism? When my country has renounced me, and will no longer owe me any thing, the contract is broken betwixt us. I reciprocally renounce her, and no longer owe her any thing.

CAMILLUS.

You have already forgot that we substituted our country in the place of our parents, and that it hath over us the authority of the laws, in default of which there would be no longer any fixed or regular society upon earth.

CORIOLANUS.

True: I conceive that we ought to regard, as a true mother, that society which hath given us birth, breeding, nourishment, which hath acquired so great rights over us by virtue of our parents and relations, which it beareth in its bosom. I am satisfied that we owe it what we owe to a mother, but—

CAMILLUS.

If my mother had forsaken me, and treated me ill, might I disown her, and fight with her?

CORIOLANUS.

No, but you might——

CAMILLUS.

Might I despise and forsake her, if she returned to me, and displayed a real grief for her ill usage of me?

CORIOLANUS.

No.

CAMILLUS.

We should therefore be always ready to re-assume the sentiments of nature for our country, or rather never lose them; and return to her service, whenever she opens the way to us.

CORIOLANUS.

I own that course seems the best, but the pride and passion of a man highly provoked suffers him not to reflect. The insolent Roman people trampled upon the Patricians. I could not brook the indignity; the enraged people obliged me to retreat to the Volsci. When I was there, my resentment, and the desire of recommending myself to that people, the Romans' enemy, induced me to take up arms against my country. But you have shewed me, my dear Furius, that I ought to have quietly submitted to my misfortune.

CAMILLUS.

We have here below the ghosts of several great men, who have done what I tell you. Themistocles having committed the fault of going away to Persia, chose rather to die, and even to poison himself, by drinking bulls' blood, than to serve the king of Persia against the Athenians. Scipio, the conqueror

of Afric, having been unworthily treated at Rome, on account of his brother, who was accused of having taken bribes in his war against Antiochus, withdrew to Linternum, where he spent the remainder of his life in solitude, not being able to resolve with himself, either to live in his ungrateful country, or to be wanting in the fidelity he owed her. This we have from himself since he came down to these realms.

CORIOLANUS.

You quote other examples, but never mention your own, which is the noblest of all.

CAMILLUS.

'Tis true, the injustice done me had rendered me useless. The other captains had also lost all authority. Men did nothing but flatter the people; and you know how fatal it is to a state, for those who govern it, to feed themselves up with vain and flattering hopes. All of a sudden the Gauls, with whom they had broken their faith, gained the battle of Allia: Rome had been gone, had they pursued the Romans. You know that the youth shut themselves up in the Capitol, and the Senators waited death in their curule chairs. 'Tis needless to relate the rest, which you have heard an hundred times over. Had I not stifled my resentment, in order to save my country, all had been irretrievably lost. I was at Ardea when I learned Rome's distress: I armed the Ardeates. I understood by spies, that the Gauls, thinking themselves masters of every thing, were buried in wine and wantonness. I surprised them in the night: I slew great numbers of them. Whereupon the Romans, like people raised from the dead, sent to invite me to be their commander. I returned answer, That they could not

represent their country, nor I acknowledge them in so doing; and that I waited the commands of the young Patricians, who were defending the Capitol, because these were the true body of the republic; that it was only them I was to obey, in putting myself at the head of their troops. Those who were in the Capitol, elected me Dictator. Mean time, the Gauls were wasted by contagious distempers; and after a siege of seven months before the Capitol, peace was at length agreed to. In the moment the money was weighing out, for which they had promised to withdraw themselves, I arrived, and returned the gold to the Romans. We guard not our city, said I then to the Gauls, with gold, but with steel: away they were struck with surprise, they made off next day; I attacked them in their retreat, and cut them to pieces.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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